

E A S T E R N L I F E ,

PRESENT AND PAST.

BY

HARRIET MARTINEAU.

" Joyful to receive the impression thereof, as the eye joyeth to receive light ; and not only delighted in beholding the variety of things, and vicissitude of times, but raised also to find out and discern the ordinances and decrees, which throughout all these changes are infallibly observed."—*Bacon. Advancement of Learning, I.*

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CHAPTER VIII.

PETRA.

WE lost no time in beginning our researches. We were to be here at least three days; but we were as impatient to look about us as if we must merely pass through, as poor Burckhardt did.—The first thing I did was to ascertain the direction of the stream, in order to understand Laborde's plan: for he gives no compass points. Having done this, and examined our platform and what I could see from it, I was presently clear as to the following particulars.

The site of Petra is not a ravine, as we had been wont to suppose; but a considerable basin, completely closed in by rocks; sufficiently ventilated, however, by the chasms and defiles left in the precipices. The area is of undulating ground, there being scarcely a level spot anywhere, beyond our platform.

The stream, dry except in winter, must have been a considerable river in former times,—for depth, though not for width. At present, it is either a fitful brook, flowing shallow over white sand, and among bushes and weeds; or it is a rushing torrent, which presently spends its force, and leaves the channel dry. As I said before, the channel was dry when we were there. In old times, its depth was considerable, as is shown by

the remains of the embankments, and piers of the bridges : and there can be little doubt of its constant flow in those times. At present, the stream is diverted, some way above, to irrigate a fertile district, leaving the torrent dependent on the rains on the nearer mountain.

It seemed clear to me that the whole of the rising ground, on each bank of the river, as high on our side as the single standing pillar, was formerly terraced. I believe I traced five terraces on our side ; and there may have been a good many more. Some large building, with a colonnade towards the river, stood on our platform. The bases of many columns are visible ; and others lie shattered, with their fragments disposed in the order in which they fell. The quantity of building stones lying heaped on both banks is greater than can be described or estimated.

The only remaining edifice in Petra is that called Pharaoh's Palace ;—a rather vulgar building, Roman in its style, and adorned with stucco garlands. It is cracked and mouldering, and will not last long. It was very near our platform. We may consider as belonging to it a Triumphal Arch standing between it and our tents. These are all in the way of buildings. But it was immediately clear to me that little is remaining also of the rock-abodes, in comparison with what once existed. I think that travellers have not only much underrated the number of rock-dwellers, but failed to perceive that what remain are the mere *débris* of what the precipices once presented to view. An observant eye may detect remnants of stucco ornaments very high up many rocks, and in great numbers. Again, many

of the excavations are so difficult to reach, and some are such mere walls or surfaces, that it appears as if the whole front of the rock, to a considerable depth, had fallen: and in these places there was usually that extraordinary gaudiness of colouring which marks the more friable portions of the rock;—that is, those portions where, exposure to the air having begun, the oxyde of iron in the rock carries on the decomposition. In these places, a finger end will bring down whole handfuls of sand. Where the rock is dun-coloured, the surface is usually well hardened.—Again, the conduits, cisterns, and flights of steps scattered over the rocks and among the precipices indicate a larger number of rock dwellings than remain now,—very great as that number is.

And how very great it is! I began with a notion that I should like to count them;—having read that they were about two hundred. With this two hundred running in my head (as one never gets over believing what one reads) I continued for some days to think of these rock-abodes as computable by hundreds, till I was startled by hearing one of the gentlemen wonder how many thousands there were. We were sitting on a rock at the moment: and as he pointed up two or three ravines, counting the holes in a single rock face, and reminded me how small a proportion these bore to the whole, I was indeed astonished. I could not admit the full extent of the marvel at the moment: but I soon saw that he was right. Dr. Robinson says* “The most striking feature of the place consists, not in the fact that there are occasional excavations, and sculptures

* Biblical Researches, II. 529.

like those above described ; but in the innumerable multitude of such excavations, along the whole extent of perpendicular rocks adjacent to the main area, and in the lateral valleys and chasms ; the entrances of very many of which are variously, richly, and often fantastically decorated, with every imaginable order and style of architecture. The cliffs upon the east and west present the largest and most continuous surfaces ; and here the tombs are most numerous. But the spur from the eastern cliffs . . . as well as other smaller spurs and promontories, and single groups of rocks, both in the north and south, are also occupied in like manner. All these sepulchres, of course, looked down upon the city of the living ; but others again are found in retired dells and secret chasms, or sometimes among the heights on either side, to which flights of steps cut in the rock lead up in several places.” Dr. Robinson’s conclusion that these excavations were all tombs, except the few which might have been temples, appeared to us on the spot very extraordinary. Elsewhere, rock tombs are, or have been, sealed up,—contain, or have contained, dead bodies, and may be counted by dozens to a large city,—each containing many bodies. Here, they are standing wide open ; no dead body (except of a modern Arab or two) has ever been found in them, and they exceed any number of houses that the area of the city can ever have contained. To these considerations we may add that it is the common practice of the Arab tribes of the Desert to live in caves ; and all their modes of living appear to be aboriginal : and that the scriptural expressions relating to such districts as this speak of habitations as well as sepulchres. Isaiah speaks of one

“that graveth an habitation for himself in a rock :”* and Jeremiah exclaims “ Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, that holdest the height of the hill : though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord.”† Obadiah, again, declares his message to be “concerning Edom,” when he says, “The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high ; that saith in his heart, ‘Who shall bring me down to the ground ?’ Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord.”‡ “There shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau,” the prophet goes on to say : and mournful indeed is the vacuity now. Every deserted place is mournful enough ;—a grass-grown farm-house in Ireland ; a city buried under mounds in Egypt : but nowhere else is there desolation like that of Petra, where these rock door-ways stand wide,—still fit for the habitation of a multitude, but all empty, and silent, except for the multiplied echo of the cry of the eagle, or the bleat of the kid. No,—these excavations never were all tombs. In the morning the sons of Esau came out in the first sunshine to worship at their doors, before going forth, proud as their neighbour eagles, to the chace ; and at night, the yellow fires lighted up from within, tier above tier, the face of the precipice.

One other feature which immediately struck us, as it must every observer, was the bad style of art wherever

* Isaiah, XXII. 16..

† Jeremiah, XLIX. 16.

‡ Obadiah, 4.

any façades remain. The grandeur of the place is not, to my eyes, at all from the ornament wrought in the rock, or stuck upon it, but altogether from its adoption as an abode by the ancient tribes of the Desert, and their adaptation of such a fastness to their purposes. There is a strong taint of colonial vulgarity in all the Roman work ; and in looking at it, our wonder was something very different from admiration.*

Such were the cursory observations we could make from our platform. But we soon went further. As soon as we had lunched, and collected a few of our armed Arabs as a guard, we set out in a body to make a general survey, in preparation for further research to-morrow. We turned off our platform at the right-hand (north-eastern) corner above the stream, and descended into the valley which is overhung by the Corinthian Tomb, as it is called, and other conspicuous excavations. The water-course and lower grounds in this valley were thickly grown with oleanders, all the way.—We passed the Theatre, the so-called Egyptian tombs, and a large number of unmarked excavations, pausing nowhere till we came to the Khasne.

Burckhardt calls this temple* “one of the most elegant remains of antiquity existing in Syria :” and other travellers have spoken rapturously of it. I think much of the charm must be owing to their having come suddenly upon it from the defile of the Sik, after an anxious and toilsome Desert journey, when every work of art, in a shady place, and among thickets of oleanders, would appear beautiful. Its position is wonderfully fine ; and its material and preservation very striking :

* *Travels in Syria and the Holy Land*, p. 424.

but it is inconceivable how any one can praise its architecture. This temple, called by the Arabs "Pharaoh's Treasury," is absolutely set in a niche. It stands in a cupboard, seeming to be made to fit it exactly. When I speak of its situation being wonderfully fine, I do not refer to this feature of it, which is good merely because it is unavoidable,—there being no space in which a building could be placed in these ravines. This peculiarity,—of a façade in a niche—is imposing in its place: but the beauty of its position lies in its being at the meeting point of two ravines, so that the Khasne suddenly confronts the traveller who arrives by way of the Sîk. The material is a pale rose-coloured stone, which is shown off most delicately by the dark shrubs which grow before it.

The height of the entire façade is between sixty and seventy feet. Of the six columns, one has fallen; and the bases and capitals of others are somewhat corroded. Above, there is an interrupted pediment, between whose halves stands an "insulated cylinder," as Burckhardt calls it; a sort of miniature temple, crowned with the urn which the Arabs believe to contain Pharaoh's treasure. They cannot bring themselves to pass it without a shot; and every man of them, unless prevented, pops away at the urn, in hope of bringing down some of the gold from the inside. There are elaborate carvings of garlands, &c., and many defaced bas-reliefs. From what remains of these, we judged them to have been bad.—The interior has nothing to show but handsome space, the principal chamber being sixteen paces square, and about twenty-five feet high.—A few broad steps lead to the portico, on either hand of which is an ornamented

door, leading to an empty side-chamber. There is nothing in the main chamber : throughout the whole building, no niche, or pit, or other sign of the place having been put to any use. There are two small hollows, in which we fancied we saw uncertain traces of bas-reliefs : but the place is obviously unfinished. There are no door-posts ; and the walls within are merely chiselled, and left rough.—In the near neighbourhood of this temple, I saw several flights of steps, wandering away up the precipices. We went but a few yards along the Sîk, as we were to explore it fully to-morrow : so we returned first to the Theatre.

The Theatre!—in the place where Esau and his tribe came to live beside the eagles ! Here it was, however; its ranges of semicircular seats cut out of the rock. Its area is supported by massive masonry, and not so encumbered with *débris* and vegetation as to prevent our easily reaching the seats. I climbed to the top, in order to enter some of the excavations ranged above,—at a great height. I found them mere square cut, empty rock-chambers.

When on the top range of the seats of the theatre, I called one or two of my companions to witness the inaccuracy of the view from this point, given by Laborde. We were on the precise spot whence the sketch was taken, as was shown by a number of neighbouring objects. It was the distance that was in fault. Before us rose a lofty barrier of rock which, of course, closed in the view : but in Laborde we have, in place of this rock, a fine retiring distance, and long perspective of façades, and a spacious valley with a meandering river, such as was never yet seen in Petra. It is a serious

matter giving false impressions of a place at once so remarkable and so little visited as this. In marking, in his plan, the Sik as “the only Entrance to the town,” Laborde may have followed Diodorus, who says there was but one way in, and that artificial; though he should not have repeated this without verifying it: but the elaborate view, with its non-existent valley and stream, is a gratuitous piece of misleading, for which I see no excuse.

The effect is fine of the lofty rock springing straight up from the back range of seats. Shallower steps than the seats run up the middle. This theatre is supposed to have seated about three thousand people.

We next crossed the defile, and climbed to the extraordinary excavation whose platform is supported by ranges of arches in solid masonry. The obtaining a platform was clearly the object here; and prodigious labour it has cost, in tier over tier of stone arches. Several of these are entire and visible, among the heaped ruins of others. The platform supports lateral colonnades,—the only lateral colonnades here. Above these colonnades were deep square holes, which indicated excavations on a second story behind. At least, we supposed so; and there were clearly upper chambers in the central portion of this temple: above these, above cornices, and pediment, and at a vast height, was the crowning urn. The central chamber is very large, and not less than forty feet high. Its walls are like those of the Khasne, merely chiselled: and it contains nothing but the little partition walls which the modern Arabs have built up of loose stones. The walls were gay with the purple, red, and grey streaks

which Dr. Robinson compares to "watered silk,"—as our companions did to mahogany.

While we were here, a series of strange wild heads popped up from below the platform,—showing that the ragged regiment of the Sheikh of Petra was upon us. Suleiman, Sheikh of Wadee Mousa, and of the tribe Aulad Benee Israel, was here in person. His followers were a dark and wild-looking set of fellows, with their ready match-locks, daggers and spears, as could be seen: but they never did us any harm, nor offered any. The Sheikh came to demand his fee of 100 piastres per head, for our entrance into Petra and abode there: and this being immediately paid, he was thankful and quiet. How different a state of things from that which existed so lately as the visits of Burckhardt, and Captains Irby and Mangles!

This evening, our friend Hussein suddenly remembered that he had forgotten two things. He had shown himself very expert, from day to day, in so visiting the tents, and making demands of the dragomen, as to obtain his coffee and tobacco from our company, and charcoal and et ceteras from the servants. He now went the round to declare that he had forgotten to say that he must have a robe (no trifle!) from each tent, and a sheep from each individual of the company:—ten robes, and fifteen sheep. He got nothing by remembering this at last.

It had been cool weather all day: and this evening and night, it was so chilly that we sat in our cloaks, and slept ill from cold.—Our good Bishara came to bid us farewell, and would not be satisfied without repeatedly kissing all the gentlemen. One, who was stooping

over his writing, offered the top of his tarboosh for the salute, but was not allowed to escape so. As for us ladies, we gave our hands to be kissed with hearty good will ; for we esteemed the worthy fellow, and were sorry to part.—In the morning, he was still there ; but after we went forth to the Sik, we saw him no more.

We were to have set forth at half-past seven : but we were detained an hour by the disputes among the Arabs about the division of their money.—As far as the Khasne, we went over the same ground as yesterday : and then we entered the Sik,—the most extraordinary entrance to a capital city, from its indomitable wilderness, that was probably ever seen. This main street of Petra is about two miles long. Its width varies from ten to thirty feet ; and it is inclosed between perpendicular rocks which spring to a height of from one hundred to seven hundred feet. These are singular conditions of a main street. It is paved and drained, but badly lighted, for the rocks so nearly meet as to leave, really and truly, only that “strip of sky” which one often reads of, but which I never remember to have before seen, except in being drawn up out of a coal-pit. Captain Mangles speaks of the sky being completely hidden in places by the overlapping rocks above : but this escaped my observation. The dimness, however, at the bottom of this chink, where we were forcing our way among the tamarisks, wild figs, and oleanders, was memorable enough.—The pavement is of large slippery stones, worn in places into ruts by ancient chariot wheels. A conduit runs along, and a little above, the wayside,—a channel hollowed in the rock : and in parts there are, at the height of thirty

feet, earthen pipes for the conveyance of water. On the face of the precipices, sometimes upright as a wall for three hundred feet, are curious marks left by more ancient men than those who paved the street, and laid the water pipes :—shallow niches, and the outlines and first cuttings of pediments ; and tablets begun and discontinued. On looking up, one sees a solitary tree, bending over the ravine from a height which makes a mere bush of it. In the fissures of the rock spring brambles, the bright green caper plant, and fig trees with translucent young leaves, and roots and stems which accommodate themselves to the crevices by inconceivable twists. Down the water-drips hang bunches and strings of delicate ferns ; and round the smooth curve of some protruding rock lies an ivy garland, pushed forth from the recess behind which is curtained with it. The homely mallow, the wild geranium and red poppy, spring in corners where there is a deposit of earth, and skirt much of the way ; and the pale blue forget-me-not lurks in the hollows under the shrubs where there was lately a pool. On ledges above one's head are heaped stones in such quantities as show how fiercely the torrent drives through this pass after the winter rains : a liability which was, of course, guarded against when this was a capital city.

In the proudest of those days, there must have been an indomitable wildness in this main avenue ;—almost as much as now ;—almost as much when the commerce and the pleasure of the city passed through it,—on the backs of camels from the East, or in chariots from Rome,—as now when a party from far England was stumbling among its *débris*, full of wonder and baffled

speculation. The sharp lights and deep shadows must have been the same then as now ; and the gay hues of the rocks. Were the sky-high trees and rock-weeds there ? and the eagle spreading his wings on his eyrie, as I saw them to-day ? And did the small birds roost in the holes of the precipice, and speckle it with their shadows as they flew ? And did the singing bird,—warbling to-day like the nightingale of the place,—find a natural perch within the city gates ? How strange must have been the strong echoes of city noises in this gorge ?—the cry of the camel drivers, the rattle of chariots, the common talk and laugh of citizens, and the play of children ! And what different people must have been met there from the few we saw to-day ! Instead of eastern merchants and Roman soldiers, and a Greek traveller or two, I saw to-day a group of goats and their herdsmen, entering into the deepest shadow from a reach of sunshine ; and a child standing with two kids on a point of rock above my head ; and a wild troop of shaggy Arabs, clattering their arms as I passed ; and here and there a solitary figure, with his matchlock, brown tunic, and white teeth, perched on a pinnacle, or striding over a distant slope.—These features of wildness carried me back far beyond the Roman and Greek times ; back to the days when the children of Ishmael and Isaac married, and settled their posterity here. Further back than this we cannot go ; for we know nothing of the Horims who were driven out from hence by Esau. But Esau, and his wife, the daughter of Ishmael, and her brother Nebajoth, and his descendants the Nabathæans were probably not unlike the wild Arab goat-herds and hunters

we met to-day, except that they carried bows instead of matchlocks. Their other arms, their dress, face, and form were probably much the same as we saw. We had only to fancy them multiplied and inhabiting the holes in the rock ; and we might put the last three thousand years of the world's history out of sight.

After exploring above a mile and a-half of this winding defile, we came to a narrow part where an arch springs from side to side at a great height : an arch whose purpose is unknown, as it appears impossible to ascend to it. It is too narrow to have been a bridge, and too steep to have been an aqueduct. This arch is the most striking object in Petra to a hasty observer ; and almost every modern traveller before ourselves was necessarily a hasty observer. Such a city-gate was probably no where else ever seen. Beneath the arch, on either side, is an empty niche, and pilasters much defaced ; and on the eastern side is a second, smaller niche.—A little further on is the entrance to the pass,—a sharp-cut passage between perpendicular rocks. A little thicket of wild figs and oleanders nearly shrouds the entrance ; beyond which rises, on the opposite side of a small area, a massive wall of masonry, supporting a platform, on which might have stood a fort. Here the excavations again begin to abound ; and for about a mile, we had all about us white rocks, squared into towers, hollowed into vaults, and cut out into abodes and baths consisting of many chambers, and adorned with pediments, and in one instance, with four small pyramids springing from the architrave. The rock chambers which are crowned with these pyramids appeared to us to be baths ; at

least, the lower series ; for there are two stories. The lower stories have to be reached by a clamber, far from easy, to the base of a flight of wide shallow steps, cut in a rock too smooth to afford a footing otherwise. In the principal lower chamber is a deewán extending round three sides, and ascended by two steps at each extremity. From a lateral chamber, there is a window looking into a dark apartment, so full of little pits as to resemble the working vats in a brewery. Travellers have hitherto supposed these to be graves : but we thought them more likely to be baths. The encroachments of nature upon these by-places of art are curious to observe. In one chamber near, I remarked a vigorous night-shade growing : and from a deep pit sprang a large fig-tree, covered with green fruit, which was still climbing to the light. In another chamber, a leafing thorn was the only inhabitant. In every lateral defile of this suburb of Petra, (as we may call it,) that I entered, there were more, and still more, excavations,—aristocratic abodes for the living or the dead, retired into aristocratic retreats. There they were, in fissures and corners, just disclosed behind the green thickets !

I saw here, in the outskirts, a substantially built drain, first deep cut in a slope of rock, and then well built with thick sides, and now choked up with dust and rubbish. And afterwards I observed what appeared from below to be gutters and spouts brought across the rocks at the height of the pinnacles of the loftiest temples, and down their sides, as if to carry off from the excavations the waters which would otherwise stream down upon them after the rains.

When we came home to rest at noon, we were told that the clergyman who had made a great point of being at Jerusalem for Palm Sunday would waive his wish, in order not to hurry the rest of the party from Petra. We were all much obliged to him; and he was himself well satisfied afterwards, when a further knowledge of our Sheikh and his ways proved that we could not have reached Jerusalem in the time proposed.

Our further exploration to-day was near home. We examined the Triumphal Arch and Pharaoh's Palace,—the only edifices in Petra, as I have said. They are not worth many words,—being Roman, and in a bad style,—the ornamental work of the palace being in stucco, and very florid. At the back, the stucco is carried up to successive stone projections, which form tiers of cornices, in which we saw nothing of purpose or beauty. By the marks on the walls within, the whole interior seems to have been covered with stucco, little of which however remains. One curious circumstance is that the arch of a recess in the innermost chamber has been built through to the back. This and the lateral chambers had a second story; whereas the vestibule appears to have sprung to the roof.

We now observed so many piers and otherwise unaccountable projections in the embankments of the water-course as to make us suppose the river to have been covered in;—the whole water-course vaulted.

While here, my eye was caught by an appearance of large gratings in the face of the western rocks; and we climbed up a rough and steep slope to examine them. They remain wholly mysterious to us all. Small, shallow, irregular holes are cut in the rock at

such distances as to leave a tolerably regular grating : and many of these holes,—so many as to indicate that all were formerly thus treated,—are filled up with stones, of a different grain from the rock, cemented in, so as to form a rough surface. The only conjecture I could form is not a very probable one ;—that this was done to procure a reliable surface to work upon,—to be afterwards covered with stucco ;—the rock being here extremely friable.—High up on this western face was what the gentlemen unanimously declared to be an inscription :—but it was impossible to get nearer to it, to make out the character.—Speaking of inscriptions, I fear we all overlooked one which Captain Mangles tells of, on a tablet under a pediment of one of the temples, the character of which Mr. Bankes declared, and proved by comparison with his notes, to be precisely the same with that of the mysterious inscriptions in Wadee Mokattein, and round the base of Horeb. This is an observation of so much importance, that we must hope the next European who visits Petra will look for this tablet, and bring home a copy of its character. In a cave further north than the western precipice, I found the base of a column : but, as there was none to answer to it, nor any trace of others within the caverns, this was pronounced to have been placed there by some “accident.”

The Sheikh was troublesome this evening about our not going on, though he had said at Akaba that we might stay a month at Petra, if we liked. We were informed that our bread and ale were all consumed ; and that the water was half an hour off, so that we had to pay two piastres for every skin that was brought. We

were provided with biscuits and a little porter; so we did not think of moving the sooner for the bad news.

On Sunday, the 21st, after service, we set off for the temple of El Deir. In describing the view from the summit of Mount Hor, Captain Mangles says,* "In the midst of this chaos of rocks, there rises into sight one finished work, distinguished by profuseness of ornament, and richness of detail. It is the same which has been described as visible from other elevated points, but which we were never able to arrive at. It bears N.E. half N. from this spot; but the number and intricacy of the valleys and ravines which we hoped might have led us to it, baffled all our attempts. No guide was to be found. With the assistance of the glass, we made out the façade to be larger, to all appearance, than that of the temple at the eastern approach" (the Khasne) "and nowise inferior to it in richness and beauty." We were fortunate enough to reach this temple; and when we afterwards saw it, as Captain Mangles did, from Mount Hor, we could well imagine how tantalising it must be to a stranger to see it in no other way.

The ascent to it was formerly by a staircase winding up the mountain to the height of 1500 feet. We reached the foot of this staircase by turning in among the oleander thickets, past Pharaoh's Palace, and pursuing the northern ravine. We found the steps much worn away; and we had to climb over many a slope of slippery rock: but it was still a magnificent avenue to a temple. It is well that there was no question of material in the case: to get the workmen up there

* *Travels in Egypt, &c., chap. VIII.*

must have been quite enough. The little flights of steps cut for the workmen's sake, to raise them to the summit of their work, had a singular effect; and these seemed to throw light on the purpose of other short and odd staircases, twisting hither and thither among other precipices. I think no one feature of the region struck me so much.

The façade is a good deal like that of the Khasne; but El Deir is even more unfinished. There is some preparation for wings, which were never cut. There are disks where garlands were to be sculptured; and pedestals, without statues or urns, and niches left empty. Some of the party thought the capitals of the pillars were only half sculptured: but I am not sure that they were not meant to remain as they are,—a clumsy approach to the Ionic. There was a curious mixture of what we must suppose to be the native architecture with the Roman; and the result is not at all beautiful. There is only one chamber, which measures about forty-five by forty feet, and is nearly forty feet high. It has an arched recess opposite the entrance; and the stone mouldings of this arch were fastened on, and not chiselled out of the rock. Some of these mouldings remain, and show how they came there. We saw many instances of this attachment of stone decorations; and everywhere, holes for the pins which had fastened them on.

From the fine area in front of this temple, we climbed to another, higher still, with nothing to remark upon in it, but a niche whose framework was elaborately ornamented. Even here, on this pinnacle in the deserts of Idumæa, we encountered the eye-sore of travellers'

names! Many were scribbled on the compartments of carved stone in this excavation.—On the platform before the entrance, we found the bases of many columns. A colonnade on this high perch must have had a singular, and perhaps a very fine effect.

We mounted one stage more;—to the summit over the top of this temple: and thence we had a magnificent view. El Deir was just below, a yellow temple completely niched in red rocks. Its area, grown over thick with lilies, looked well: but there was a more remarkable one near,—at a rather higher elevation, whose circle of hewn stones and shrubs indicated very clearly that here had been a circus. How was this possible, unless, as I was sometimes driven to suppose, the people had wings? Fluted columns, covered thickly with cement, lay in fragments beside the circle of stones.—North and east arose the red rocks which form the material and barrier of the city on that side; and above them swelled the round, whitish mountains which shut in the whole. Then the view was bounded by rocks, with holes, flights of steps, and occasional trees, as far as the south, where towered Mount Hor, crowned with the tomb of Aaron. Dark peaks arose between us and it; and from the ravine below was heard the sound of running waters. Then, as we turned, we seemed to look upon chaos, so tremendous was the confusion of black and brown mountains near, and yellow beyond,—bare and precipitous to a degree oppressive to the sense: while halfway between them and us, was the most singular relief that could be found even in this singular place;—a perfect hermitage! An extremely narrow path of rock, with a sheer precipice

on either hand connected an otherwise isolated summit with the height on which we stood: and in a face of that summit was a single excavation, which had that narrow bridge and a flight of steps all to itself. I never saw an abode, for the living or the dead, so utterly solitary as this.—Beyond all these objects, and spreading away to the south and west, to the utmost limit of vision, was the Desert,—now streaky, now shadowy,—all immense and still,—with no marked objects but a faint hill or two on the furthest horizon, and a chain of hills to the west. Of the piling of the rocks, and the retiring of the ravines near, and of the chaos of mountains behind, there is, says my journal, no giving an idea: nor can there be a hope of preserving such imagery in its impressiveness. No faculty is equal to it.

Mr. E. found in a cave, this day, a dried corpse. The Arabs said there was nothing to be seen there; and they might not know of it: but there it lay, wrapped in well-woven cotton. There was some flesh left on the bones,—as dry as they. From the modern sewing in the joining of the wrapper, we concluded this body to be that of a not very ancient Arab. In only one other instance did we meet with human bones:—we found a heap of them under some regularly laid stones in a cave of the northern ravine. If these many thousands of excavations were all tombs, where are all the millions of skeletons gone,—leaving actually no trace of one single body?—Possibly the bodies may be yet to be found, in closed receptacles, in some neighbouring valley of Tombs.

This morning, the Sheikh came to get a pipe, under

pretence of trying to persuade us to go on to-morrow morning. This evening, he required us to take on the same number of camels that we brought from Akaba, though our stores were much reduced. In order not to refuse everything he asked, we agreed to this. His reason for the request became plain, as men and camels grew weaker from want of food, so that it required the same number to do the diminished work.—When I say that we agreed to this and that, I mean that Mr. E. did. By this time, Mr. E. found himself charged with the whole business of managing the Sheikh, and arranging the journey affairs, as far as the European party had anything to do with the matter at all. It was Mr. E.'s knowledge of affairs and very fine temper which brought this responsibility upon him. Every one was glad to devolve the business upon one so capable and so kindly willing, and who had at once proved himself so steady and so good humoured in his management of the old miser with whom he had to deal. It was very curious and very interesting to see the effect of his manliness and fine temper upon the Sheikh. The old man mistook the moral dignity for that of high birth and station; and declared his conviction that Mr. E. was one of the greatest men in Europe. It was clear that he really did stand in awe of our friend; and what we should have done without the help of this awe, we often wondered.

This day, we had no milk and no eggs; and we were warned that only two fowls were left. We made ourselves quite easy, however, while we had good mutton and biscuit. It rained this evening, and I put my hand out of the tent to feel the rain;—the first for so

many months! Now it had come, we were to have enough of it.

I was awakened in the night by a slap in the face from my canopy, which was dancing about from the rocking of the tent. The tent curtains were open, and flapping, as if preparing to take flight. I awoke Mrs. Y., and we called the servants to look to the tent-pegs, which they had the greatest difficulty in fastening down, from the strength of the wind. The dust poured in, till our very bedding was penetrated by it. Our clothes were draggling on the ground in this dust; and some of them, with three rolling bottles of wine, were picked up outside. Two sets of sleepers in the camp had their tents blown clear away to some distance. In the morning, I found that dust had lodged between the pages of our books, and even in the depths of my saddle-bags. There was then intermitting rain, which settled into a determined down-pour at noon. To me, one of the most observable things about this rain was its effect upon my own health. For many weeks I had been very unwell; and, since leaving Cairo, had suffered from a tormenting face-ache. Now, before it had rained an hour, I felt wonderfully relieved; and the benefit of this rain lasted nearly to Damascus, where we had more.

Early in the morning, two of us went a short round, happily choosing the watercourse for our scene of observation. We descended into it, and studied the embankments and piers to some distance on either hand, little knowing how fortunate we were in using the opportunity. It was evident that there were large and substantially built reservoirs above the river, near

Pharaoh's Palace. The number of cisterns and tanks among the rocks, at various heights, we had observed before.

After breakfast, a large party of us went forth in defiance of the heavy showers, thinking that, once among the eastern temples, we could flit from cave to cave, and see a great deal with little wetting. We did see a great deal; but the wetting was complete enough. We went through the whole range of the great eastern temples, which it would weary the reader to hear of one by one. In one,—that which has three tiers of columns, we discovered that the architrave, which had been stuccoed, was painted in perpendicular stripes.—In several of these temples, there is an arched recess opposite the entrance; and in two or more, we observed niches within this recess. Whether this looks like urn-burial, or heathen sacrifice, people must judge for themselves. In two instances only, we found the ceilings divided superficially into compartments. As for the rest, what we found was pits, stone deewáns, and recesses in rows, like stalls in a stable.—The capitals of the columns and the cornices were fastened on, and not cut out of the rock; and afterwards stuccoed and painted. In one case, the rock had failed, near the top of the temple; and the failure was supplied by masonry, supported on an arch. The water-courses by the sides of the temple, and, I think, a horizontal gutter, were plainly distinguishable here.

These temples, with their florid decorations, naturally strike a stranger more than anything else at first,—they mingle so oddly with the other features of the scene: but one soon neglects them for the far more

interesting excavations of an earlier date. I suppose the primitive abodes (whether of the living or the dead) were those which have no ornament at all;—nothing whatever being done to the outside. But after these comes another order, specimens of which may be met at every step. These have their whole exterior and its several parts, where this can be managed, inclining inwards, in the Egyptian mode; and sometimes backwards also. Some of the doorways, and many of the pilasters, diminish towards the top. But the most distinctive mark of these Arabian abodes is their parapet. From a point in the middle of the cornice, a flight of steps,—that is, a representation of such in relievo,—retires;—three, four, or six steps according to the width of the building: and a line resting on the top step finishes the parapet. Sometimes the steps converge from the sides, instead of departing; and then of course, they meet in a top step. This appears odd, and a fancy devoid of beauty, at a distance; but it is an ornament appropriate to the place, and it looks very well there. We may remember that stairs in the rock were a great blessing to the limbs, and a great beauty in the eyes, of the inhabitants of this fastness;—as much so perhaps as the fluted column in the eyes of Egyptians and Greeks, to whom the flutings were sheaths for their arms; or the laurel-wreath to the Romans, in whose minds it was associated with ideas of victory. The steps of these Nabathæan (or other Arabian) parapets are homely in the comparison: but they are a natural device, and therefore not a wholly ungraceful one.

There was nothing in our ramble this morning so
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pretty as the ground. Among the rocks, there were flowery patches, like gardens. And the slopes up to the higher excavations, and the platforms and recesses among the uneven rocks, were carpetted with grass and wild flowers, and clumped with shrubs. Among many familiar wild flowers, I found one plant which we never see wild at home. The scarlet anemone grew richly and abundantly here,—as abundantly as I ever saw poppies in a field.

For some time, we eluded the worst of the rain by running from cave to cave : but at last, by some accident, the party was scattered. One group had gone home early,—afraid of the damp : another was in a lower tier of caves. A third had found dry wood, and made a great fire. Two of the gentlemen and I found ourselves in a cave which was cold, without guide or dragoman, while the rain was coming down like a shower-bath. We waited and watched : and a very pretty thing it was to watch the little white torrents dashing down from the summits, here and there, as far as we could see. But these same waterfalls were sending streams down the intervals of the slopes before us,—in some places already ankle-deep. The whole sky was one dark grey : and it struck me that, not only was there no prospect of its clearing up, but that we were too far from home to run the risk of further delay. My companions objected that we had no guide, and were quite ignorant of the way; whereas somebody would certainly be coming soon to look for us. I had a pocket-compass with me, however, and was quite sure of the general direction. I knew that the tents lay south-west, on the other side of the water-course.

So, off we went, as straight as an arrow ;—across gullies, over hills, through ankle-deep water,—for it was no time for picking and choosing our footing. One of my companions was lame that day ; but on he must go, over stone-heaps and through pools. We found a way down into the water-course,—walked many yards along it,—knowing now where we were,—and got out of it not far from our platform. Within three minutes, before I had half put off my wet clothes, I heard a shout :—the torrent had come down. Down it came, almost breast-high,—rushing and swirling among the thickets and great stones in the water-course, giving us a river in a moment, where we had never dreamed of hoping to see one ! As soon as I could, I ran out to the verge of the platform ; and I shall never forget the sight. It was worth any inconvenience and disappointment. We forgot the dripping tent, from which little rills ran upon our bedsteads : we forgot the lost hours of this last day, and our damp wardrobes, and all our discomforts. There was the muddy torrent,—or rather the junction of two torrents, which divided the channel between them for some way ;—the one which had come from the Sik, and past the theatre, being muddy, and the other, from the north-east, being clear. On came the double stream, bowing and waving the tamarisks and oleanders,—the late quarters of the Arabs who were now looking on from the opposite bank !—Just before sunset, I went to look again. The white waterfalls were still tumbling from the steeps ; and the whole scene was lighted up by a yellow glow from the west, where the sky was clearing. The torrent was still dashing along, making eddies among the stones ; and

beyond it, in a thicket, under a wall of rock, was a group of Arabs round a fire, whose smoke curled up above the trees.—At night, I went out once more; and that was the finest of all. The torrent was too deep within its banks to be touched by the moon, which was now shining brightly. The waters could scarcely be seen, except in one spot where they caught a gleam from an Arab fire. But at this hour, its rush seemed louder than ever. I was startled to see how many were looking at it with me. All along the opposite ridge, and on every point of the descent, were dim figures of Arabs ; and in the precipices, there was quite an illumination. Row beyond row of the caves gave out yellow gleams ; and in the moonlight rose little pillars and wreaths of white smoke. The Arabs had come up from the whole country round, at the sound of the waters ; and I had seen Petra populous once more.

I could not have supposed I could like a reeking tent so well. Our clothes were hung up in all directions, for the chance of a drying : the air seemed heavy with steam. My bed was wet, though I had bundled it up under a square of Mackintosh cloth, as well as I could : but we were very happy still. The best thing was, it was now impossible to go to-morrow ; the tents being too heavy with wet to be portable. It was no trifile to me to have lost all my aches and pains at once : and then there was the thought that I had seen Petra with its river and its wild citizens. We ordered in a large pan of charcoal, and made a very pleasant evening of it, after all. I thought at the time as I think now, —that there is an agreeable, as well as useful, virtue

in these accidents of travel ; and that those who do not find it so had better make themselves comfortable at home.

The next day, the 23rd of March, was a profitable one. Instead of going from cave to cave, which could not now teach us much more, we made it our object to obtain some general views of the place ; in which we succeeded. The company divided on this last day. Some of the gentlemen went again in the direction of the Sik, to make another attempt to copy the often-mentioned Greek inscription, which was on a façade near the Khasne. The gentlemen had tried before to spell it out ; and now it was to be copied, if possible. It was the wish of our own party to trace the area of Petra to the north ; so we set out by ourselves, with a sufficiency of armed guides.—We thought these Arabs very fine-looking people, with faces full of life. They were always civil to us, and evidently much amused at our dress and ways. Our guides examined Mrs. Y.'s cloak and my trumpet, and showed us their muskets in return. They carried muskets, matchlocks, heavy clubs, and short swords. I was never tired of noting their wandering figures, brown and grey, on points of rock and sunny slopes.

Our guides assured us that they led us round by the most northerly part of Petra. Of course, they know best, and must be right ; but there were two ravines which I would fain have explored, if we had had more time. We passed through some curious chasms this morning, saw many troughs and cisterns, with steps cut over the slopes to each ;—overlooked many excavations, and were completely puzzled by a new discovery. We

found several pits cut in the rock, one of which had steps, and the others foot-holes, down one end; and these pits led each to a subterranean place which was too dark for us to explore. I hope the next traveller who goes will look to this. The most striking of the new excavations which we saw was a series of ascending doors up the side of a ravine, like the doors of houses in a steep street. This series, and a set of façades in stages, withdrawn behind and above one another on the southern outskirts, are among the venerable features in the architecture of Petra.—To-day we saw a large tank, partly walled with masonry, placed close by one wholly cut out of the rock. The wall was deep and solid, and the inside of the tank had been stuccoed throughout.

Partly by steps, and partly by sheer clambering, we reached a very high point,—a round summit,—from whence we obtained as fine a view of the whole place as its own obstructions allow. Nothing could be more unlike the gorge I had imagined before I came. We looked down on a large area of undulating ground, with its terrace lines now clearly marked enough, and the sites of many great buildings as evident as the still-standing Palace itself, with their overthrown columns lying beside them in round fragments. The water-course wound through the midst, with its confusion of shrubs and bordering rocks. To the South, appeared the single standing column, stationed above the craggy way by which we had arrived, and by which we were to-morrow to depart.—Our platform and tents now appeared to be nearly in the middle of the area. Behind them rose rocks, range behind range, pierced with

portals, gradually increasing in height, and offering more façades, till the eye, travelling eastwards, arrived at the valley where the theatre is, and could detect the dark cleft of the Sîk. Further round to the east, rose the great group of façades which we visited yesterday : and then the whitish outside mountains showed themselves, giving an idea of an opening to the north, which the guards, however, deny. All the rest of the circumference was filled up with vast precipitous summits, (behind which El Deir was hidden), gorges, and the mystery of steps, cisterns, and caves, till the eye arrived at the western façades, and the single column again. This bird's-eye view was very valuable : and I do not know that it indicated any one great object left unachieved ; though, as I need not say, there is work for many successive travellers, and for many weeks of research, whenever a qualified party will set their minds upon going through with it. The only thing I much regretted leaving unvisited was a pyramid perched upon an extraordinary height ;—we thought higher than El Deir. We caught a sight of it now and then between the clefts of the precipices ; and best, I think, from the platforms before the eastern façades. We have no idea what it is, or how it is to be reached.

In the afternoon came the Sheikh again, with new demands ! The conference between him and Alee was a capital spectacle,—Alee on his haunches before the iron-faced old man,—the dragoman's mobile countenance now astute, now winning ! Hussein refused porter ; but his heart was softened when Mr. Y. offered him figs. He gained nothing else by his demands : yet he embraced Mr. E., and declared that he was certainly

the greatest man in Europe, and one whom he would always have for his friend.

In the evening, Mr. W. came to give us the result of his visit to the Greek inscription. It was soon told. The whole façade had fallen,—brought down, no doubt, by the rains of yesterday! When the party arrived, they found the way blocked up by masses of stone; and the guides were aghast at the ruin. It was well for us, and more than we could have expected, that they did not attribute the mischief to the profanation of our visit, and take vengeance on us accordingly. Mr. W. searched, and found a bit of the inscription: but as a whole, it is irrecoverable. That far-famed work is gone for ever! This is a warning to us not to judge of what Petra was by what we see now. It is natural to suppose a sort of immutability in a rock-fastness like this: but we see here how much depends on the structure of the rock, and the influences which operate upon it. The forces of wind and water are great at Petra: and the presence of oxyde of iron here, as of saltpetre in the columns at Karnac, seems to insure the fall of works which would appear likely to greet as many generations as the everlasting hills.

I again went out at night, and saw the fires of the Arabs, even in some very distant caves. But instead of clear moonlight, there were clouds driving in the cold rising wind. I lingered over this night view; for it was the last. In the morning, we were to be off; and the most romantic vision of the travels of my life would be withdrawn.

CHAPTER IX.

MOUNT HOR.--FROM PETRA TO THE FRONTIER OF PALESTINE.

ON the morning of Wednesday, March 24th, ten of our company were off before seven, with a party of guides, to ascend Mount Hor. The rest of our number were to set out later, and to await us with luncheon at an appointed spot, while the baggage camels were to proceed still further, that our tents might be pitched before we reached our resting-place. This separation of our party showed that the Sheikh apprehended nothing from enemies just here, though he had been so cautious after leaving Akaba.

I walked out of Petra, wishing to have my last look of it undisturbed. It was more striking than ever; and especially the inclosing rocks, with their cloven summits and nest-like habitations. The last object, belonging to Petra itself, which was visible, was the single column, which we left standing like a sentinel above the pass. As I walked from it, I left Petra to its mists and mysterious quietude, and turned my thoughts to Mount Hor, which rose immediately before me.

We were assured that the ascent was only 1500 feet from the high ground on which we stood.—We were well pleased to be permitted to ascend this mountain;

but I certainly had no idea at the time how rare was the privilege we were enjoying. Burckhardt was prevented, both by fatigue and the opposition of his guide, from going further than "the high plain called Aaron's terrace, at the foot of the mountain upon which his tomb is situated :" that is, the plain on which we now emerged from the bed of a torrent, which we had been following for some time. Here Burckhardt sacrificed a goat to Aaron, fulfilling the pretended vow by which alone he was enabled to get even thus far. He declares that he afterwards much regretted having failed to visit the tomb. Laborde and Linant had to hurry away from Petra without ascending Mount Hor. Dr. Robinson was not permitted to attempt it. Captains Irby and Mangles went up, by a path needlessly difficult, it appears ; and they came down the same way ; thus missing the very remarkable objects on the western side of the mountain.

Captain Mangles says of the ascent, " We began to mount the track, which is extremely steep and toilsome, and affords but an indifferent footing. In most places, the pilgrim must pick his way as he can, and frequently on his hands and knees. At the steepest points there are flights of rude steps, or inclined planes, constructed of stones laid together ; and here and there are notches cut in the rock, to receive the foot. The impressions of pilgrims' feet are scratched in the rock in many places ; but without inscriptions." Though we went up the same side of the mountain, we must have been led by a different path, for I remember nothing of going on hands and knees ; and my journal says of the ascent, " It is easy,—as rocky ascents usually are, mounting

from platform to platform by stones and water-courses. There were many signs of the late rain, and the wild-flowers were fresh and pretty. Mr. W. found a red tulip. From the highest platform below the summit, we saw, niched in the precipitous opposite mountain, the façade of El Deir : and extraordinary it looked ! I could not but think of old Aaron, coming up here to die, and wondering what his thoughts were and those of his companions." I have always thought that little narrative * eminently beautiful. It is so brief, so simple, so full of calm, penitent obedience !

The Mohammedans make a great saint of Aaron. They have built his tomb on the summit of this mountain ; and the place has been visited in pilgrimage for centuries, and by multitudes. Times are much changed now, as I thought when I stood on the summit ; for these bigots have so far surrendered their horror at Christians as to permit us to see every thing here for 20 piastres a head,—the excuse for the charge being that it was to pay for candles.

Just below the summit, some of the party found a fragment of a column, and some bits of marble. Within the tomb,—which is a square building, with a cupola rising from the middle of the roof,—we found a piece of handsome pavement of inlaid marble : and more fragments, some wrought and some plain, were mixed in with the rough flooring. Two very small carved capitals were lying on the ground, and three pieces of the shaft of a column composed three steps of the outside flight which led to the roof. Unfortunately we had no interpreter with us to obtain information from

* Numbers, XX. 22—29.

the old keepers of the tomb as to whence these things came, the dragoman being with our friends and goods below. The most mysterious thing in the tomb was a round, polished black stone (which, however, one of the gentlemen believed to be a lump of glass) fixed in the wall, and, judging by the mark on the wall round it, kissed by multitudes of devotees.—In the chamber stands a sarcophagus of stone and marble, carved, on the end next the door, with an Arabic inscription, which had once been on a blue ground. This was covered in like an oven, and wrapped over with a heap of sordid cloths,—votive offerings. Rags and shreds of yarn are hung round in great quantities.—There is a crypt, reached by a staircase from this chamber, and we went down to see the place where the body of Aaron is supposed to have been laid. It is a mere cupboard, within an unhinged grating.

I went up to the roof for the sake of the view,—one last view, from a height, of the boundless Desert. Its horizon line was so high as to make one look again; to be sure that one had not taken the hazy sky for it. There it lay, with its broad lights and streaks of shadow beyond the crowd of mountains about us. Even my journal declines describing these, saying only that wilderness is the most indescribable of all the attributes of scenery, and that the wadees running between the masses catch the eye, and seem the only avenues out of chaos. The wind at the top was not high, but rather cold.

We descended the mountain on its north-east side, by what seems to have been the Calvary path of devotees, by the steps cut and facilities provided. It

is very precipitous, but thus made easy. For some way down, it was like a winding staircase: and this staircase led to a singular work, not far from the summit. Alighting on a small platform, I could not but think it artificial; and on descending a staircase at one corner, like that which led down to the Nilometer, I found a very large reservoir, arched over with fifteen arches, which supported the blocks of hewn stone composing the platform. The descent to the reservoir was also arched. The cavity was not full of water, but there was still a good supply. Burckhardt says* "The plain of Haroun and the neighbouring mountains have no springs; but the rain water collects in low grounds, and in natural hollows in the rocks, where it partly remains the whole year round, even on the top of the mountain :" and this is clearly the chief reservoir. When we looked up from below the platform, we saw that it was supported by a wall of massive masonry;—a great work. On the next area, we found such heaps of building stones, and long lines of foundation, as showed that large erections had once stood here. There were traces of terraces, one above another; and a pit which had evidently been a large tank. The place seems to have been little short of a city: but now we found no signs of present habitation, except in a shallow excavation, where the floor was strewn with dried reeds, on which stood a cauldron. A large flock of goats was seen further down; and the herdsmen probably lived in these caves.—In a stony valley, an hour and a half from the summit, we met our camels. The ascent, about which we had taken our time,

* *Travels in Syria, &c., p. 430.*

occupied two hours: and now, after mounting our camels, we descended for two hours more, before we joined the rest of our party, and sat down to lunch just after two o'clock.

I was struck by a little incident to-day, which seems to me curious. At a difficult part of the ascent, one of my friends advised me to try his stick. Of course, I would not deprive him of it: so another of the gentlemen cut one for me, from among the low, stout trees which grew near. But one of the guides was carrying his cobbous, which he was desired to lend me, as more convenient on account of its handle. The cobbous is a stick with a very peculiar handle, which makes it precisely resemble the Power symbol of the Egyptian gods, and which is like no other staff that I know of. The Arab, otherwise a very obliging man, was evidently reluctant to make the exchange, even as a loan: and for two days, during which I carried his cobbous, he never lost sight of me. He kept near my camel, and hung round the tent, and looked in, to point to the stick, and sent me messages to remind me that it was only lent, and to ask when he should have it again: and he would not exchange it for anything whatever. I was disposed to think, from observation of him, and of the two or three others who carried the cobbous, that it was their symbol of Power or dignity: and then I exchanged sticks with him again, to his evident relief. He was like another man when he had snatched his cobbous, and hugged it once more.

The rest of the day's journey was a continued and pretty steep descent, for an hour and a half, into the plain; and we encamped in Wadee Araba. The moun-

tains showed every variety of hue that we had seen in the Peninsula. One black mass rose beautifully out of the sands on our left ; and while I was admiring it, my eye was caught by our tents, ready pitched at the foot of one of its spurs, and beside the shrubs of a water-course which bounded our camp on the other side. I was not sorry to find we were so near our resting-place, for my camel had been very troublesome by lying down, whenever my attention wandered from my rein. The animal had had an easy day's work, as I had not mounted till after noon. Though it had cropped at every bush we passed, I was not fully aware how far the poor beast was exhausted with hunger.—We had notice from the Sheikh this evening that we must be stirring early in the morning.

On the 25th, our journey lay through the wadée ;—plain riding, sometimes among shrubs, where our camels made a very inconvenient rush at the tamarisk twigs, and were always trying to lie down. To avoid the irksomeness of this, I walked the greater part of the way, sometimes over water-courses so muddy as fairly to daub my boots ;—a sign that the rain had been here too. I saw three large flocks of wild geese, which flew round and round in apparent confusion ; and some of the company observed a herd of gazelles afar. It was so hot that we waited an hour for luncheon, rather than sit down where there was no shade. In half an hour after remounting, the Sheikh wanted to encamp ; but we began to think we should never reach Jerusalem at this rate, and rode on. I happened to be foremost of our company, and I thus came in for a fine sight.

As usual, ten armed guards were in the van ; and

the sheikhs were pushing their horses hither and thither. The scouts had ascended a sandhill, in advance, and a little to the right; and it was plain that there was a commotion there. Hasan, the Sheikh second in dignity, galloped up, rose in his stirrups, shook his spear, flung away his turban, letting his top-knot stream in the wind, and galloped away again, raising the sand in clouds wherever it was dry enough. Then, what a hubbub there was! The guards were mustered, the camels driven together in a mass, the sheikhs flying about, and giving notice that we were to be attacked by Bedoueens from behind the sandhills. The matchlocks were made ready, and swords and knives looked to. Just at this moment, when I was at the height of expectation of seeing the grandest of Desert sights, an old negro camel-driver ran up, snatched the rein out of my hand, and trotted my camel away, pulling it forward with all his strength. By every sign I could think of, I ordered him to give me my rein: but the old fellow was as imperious as I could be; and we were nearly out of sight of our guard before I came in the way of a dragoman who could compel the man to do as I wished. I rode back, but met some of my party, who said we were to wait till the rest of the caravan came up. There was a gathering and delay behind; and soon a message arrived that one of the ladies had fainted,—not from fear, but previous illness,—and could not come on. Here we waited an hour, near a pretty little oasis; a jungle of reeds and bushy palms. When the alarm seemed over, we dismounted, and sat under a thorny-acacia. We wondered whether this little affair was

real or a sham : but agreed that if it was a sham, the drivers were not in the plot. Their alarm was real enough.—Long afterwards, when we were in Syria, we learned that the matter was indeed serious. Sheikh Hussein was smuggling us through the territory of a tribe with whom he should have shared the money paid for our passage. The old man was really terrified, but pacified the Bedoueens by some means, so that they let us pass now : but they rose on him, on his return, shot his beautiful horse under him, and killed six of our escort. Poor fellows ! it was no fault of theirs.

At the end of an hour, we saw the rest of the company slowly approaching, and we mounted : but we went on only for a few minutes,—to the foot of the white hills which we were to cross the next day.—We heard no more of the robbers ; but there was a different kind of robber in the camp at night,—a wolf which, no doubt, came after our sheep. One of the gentlemen saw it ; but it was gone before he could get his gun ready.—I think it was this evening that Mr. E. came in, in a hurry, to order our rice to be boiled for some of the men,—having discovered that our camel-drivers had lived upon grass for two days. The Sheikh had provided no food for them. The matter was now becoming serious. We went a shorter distance every day, and were perpetually delayed from the inability of the baggage-camels to keep up with us. Our own beasts were feeble ; yet my driver had more than once jumped up behind me without leave. He was forbidden to do this again, as the beast was in no condition to carry double : but I believe the man was almost as little able to carry himself.—There was much doubt

this evening whether our invalid companion could proceed to-morrow ; for she was very ill. Happily, there was an excellent mesmerist in the company, who tried his power upon her with admirable effect. She revived surprisingly, had a quiet night, and was in the morning able to go on.

During the 26th, we traversed the skirts of the mountains of Seir, crossing ridges of truncated sand hills, and dropping into basins or wadees, tufted with shrubs. We encamped, in a high wind, at the foot of the pass of Sufa, which we were to cross very early to-morrow.

Mrs. Y. and I were off on foot before six. This pass is supposed to be the one by which the Hebrews attempted to enter Palestine the first time, from Kadesh, when they were driven back to their long wandering. Before us was a limestone rock, believed to be a thousand feet high. It was split by a ravine, the right side of which we pursued, while the camels, and most of the walkers, took the left ; and very picturesque they looked, winding up the heights. At the top, where the ravine closed, and was surmounted by a fort, there was scarcely a footing for the camels, the steep slope being bare, shelvy limestone, with occasional notches or steps, and traces of an old path, but with scanty available footing now. It was by this road that the Egyptian army entered Syria ; and the masonry which I saw at the closure of two ravines, and the fort at the summit of the pass are probably the work of Ibraheem Pasha. Some, however, believed the fort to be ancient. It was here that we bade farewell to Wadee Araba ; and wild beyond description was the scene.

After walking for three hours among the passes, I found the company seated under a tree, compelled to wait for the baggage-camels. After resting a considerable time, and then rising we were stopped by the Sheikh, and detained another half hour. So we ordered luncheon, to save time. It was only half-past ten : but we had set out very early.—Then we went on again, the Sheikh having borrowed a horse, and set Lady —— —— on his, paying her every attention, by way of propitiating the company. I think it was within an hour when I, being in advance of the other camel riders, came in view of a shrubby wadée, where Lady —— —— was sitting in the shade, and the Sheikh standing beside his spear, which was stuck in the ground, while his men were making fires. Here he meant to encamp: but I knew the gentlemen behind would not consent to stop so soon,—so necessary as it now was to push on to some place where food could be had for men and camels. Lady —— —— told me the old man was quite determined to stop: and he made signs to me to dismount, which I refused. He came to me, and made the camel lie down,—the animal unfortunately understanding Arabic better than English. I made it get up again, and rode back to tell the gentlemen what they would find. Mr. E. and others declared at once that we should on no account stop till four o'clock ; and it was now only one. I asked to be ordered to move on ; and on we went,—Mr. E. and I and a youth of the party. The Sheikh came in front of us; but we passed him with a civil greeting. He ordered the drivers to make our camels lie down: we made them get up again. The worst of it was that the animals were ready to take the least

hint about stopping. My camel lay down against my will thirteen times this day.—The Sheikh himself next caught hold of Mr. E.'s rein, and in the most insulting manner, brought his camel down on its knees. This was the only moment when I was really alarmed. It seemed too much to expect that Mr. E., with a stick in his hand, should not rap his knuckles. But I might have known our friend's prudence and fine temper better. He raised and turned his camel, and went on.

We agreed now that we were in for it. We had defied the Sheikh in the presence of his people, and taken on ourselves the conduct of the journey for the time. We conscientiously believed this to be necessary, in order to get on to Hebron within any reasonable time, and in any condition but that of starvation : but we agreed that we would bear in mind the mortification we had inflicted, and spare the old man's feelings in other matters as much as we could. On looking back, I saw that our comrades were following us ; and soon Lady — — and the Sheikh appeared in the rear. Our dragoman was grave, and some of the Arabs evidently perplexed.

On we went, through a wadée, strewn with wild flowers,—we three in front, and Mr. F. riding not far behind,—when the Sheikh galloped past, stopped a-head, in the middle of the way, and waited with his spear, as if to bar our progress. We greeted him and rode by. He then tried his final manœuvre. He wheeled his horse at full gallop round and round us, coming nearer and nearer, till he almost closed upon Mr. E. ; and when behind him, raised his spear with a theatrical air, and stuck it into Mr. E.'s camel under

the tail. I saw that it was so gently done that the animal would not be the worse; and this convinced me that the whole was a show, for the sake of intimidation. Mr. E. was so quiet, that I thought at first that he was not aware what was doing: but he turned on his seat with a look which said, as plainly as looks can speak, "O! that is the way you think to frighten me:" and rode on as before,—only bidding our young friend let his pistols alone. Both this youth and Mr. F. had recourse to their pistols in a moment: but there was no occasion for them. Mr. E.'s contempt had done the business. The old Sheikh sneaked off, completely crest-fallen, and dropped into the rear. The whole scene, which passed more quickly than I can describe it, was so ridiculous,—there was so much of stage effect about it,—that it made me laugh for an hour after. I might have recovered my gravity sooner, but the second Sheikh, Hasan, who had come up to see, and to help, I suppose, if necessary, was now walking near: and he seemed so utterly perplexed at my laughter that it set me off again. If I stopped for a moment, he came to the head of my camel, and peeped under my hat, with such an expression of perplexity and amazement in his face, that it made me burst forth again.

"And now," I said to Mr. E., "what will you do next?"

"It is now twenty minutes past two. We will ride on till four."—I begged for some little concession; and it was settled that we should stop at the next advantageous place after another hour.

The Sheikh two or three times cantered past us, planted his spear, and waited: and when he saw that

we did not attend to it, rode on again,—not coming near us, or using any threats. If I had not known that the Arabs, though they can occasionally talk about revenge, are not apt to bear malice, I should have felt rather uneasy; but there was no worse result than a confirmation of our Sheikh's conviction that Mr. E. was the greatest man in Europe. Our affairs with old Hussein certainly taught us that the display of force and imperiousness which we always hear of as necessary with the Arabs, is no more necessary with them than with any other people. Mr. E. did not show his arms, or look fierce, or talk big. He was fearless, steady, and good-tempered; and the old chief was as completely subdued as he could have been by any demonstration of physical force. Mr. E. had the thanks of our whole company for his moderation and firmness; and I consider it no small result of our adventures in the Desert that we have proof how manly goodness will avail with a tribe of people with whom it has hitherto been considered necessary to use force or the threat of it. The manliness is, however, indispensable. Reasonableness and amiability will not do without firm speech and fearless face.

We had the pleasure of entering upon a green wadec before we stopped to-day;—of riding over grass, however thin it might be,—and seeing by the wayside the purple iris, large and small, wild oats, daisies, buttercups, and abundance of the homely mallow. The whole ground might have been English, except for the fine scarlet anemones, which grew as plentifully as any other weed. We had sand-hills on the one hand, and stony hills on the other; and when we came to a

pleasant nook, partly sheltered from the wind (which blew strong,) and overspread with grass, Mr. E. dismounted. I was amused to see the Sheikh's celerity in striking his spear, and his emphasis in giving orders, as if it was he who had chosen the resting-place.

Four scorpions were found in two tents, as soon as they were pitched; and the number of black beetles under the stones was wonderful. There was a fort on a rising ground above us; and from that height, the flat-topped trees in the wadees looked picturesque. It was observable that they were of larger growth now, day by day; especially the thorny-acacia.

The dragomen expressed themselves glad that we had nearly done with Hussein's Arabs, who had been throughout the journey lazy, disobliging, and always wanting pay,—loading the camels badly, and spoiling the things, refusing to re-load what fell, and to get water, or render any service asked of them. For their rapacity they had the example of their chief: and their laziness might be partly excused on the score of weakness from hunger.

The Sheikh sought an interview this afternoon with Mr. E.; and he demanded the rest of his money. He was told he should have it at Hebron, and not before: whereupon he said he should draw off all his men and camels that night, and leave us in the Desert.—He was told that we could not prevent him, if he chose to do that: but that he had better consider the consequences: that we had a friend at Cairo in the Consul-general; and that if any harm happened to us, or to any British subject, through his means, the Pasha would take care that it should be very long indeed before he heard the

last of it. He repeated his threat very emphatically, and withdrew. We did not believe he would desert us : but, if he did, we imagined that some Arabs near would be happy to take his place, in order to get his money. The day before, a party of Bedoueens, armed and formidable looking, had appeared from behind the sand hills ; and it seemed doubtful for a few minutes whether we were to have peace or war. But, after a conference, there was a prodigious kissing all round, and the strangers vanished. Still, the impression was conveyed to us that these men were not satisfied, the cause of their discontent being the same as in the former case ; that Hussein was carrying us through their territory without paying tribute. There was reason to believe they were now not far off ; and we thought it probable that they would be thankful to convey us to Hebron for Hussein's pay. There was no occasion to ask them, however. In the morning, there was Hussein, smoking away as grandly as ever !

This was the morning of Sunday, March 28th,—a memorable day in the history of our journey ; for it was that of entering upon the Holy Land. It had been agreed over night that we should start early, and stop early, in order to have service. We were now about four hours from the frontier ; and our faculties seemed sharpened to note every object that met our eyes on these outskirts of the most sacred region on the earth's surface. How well I remember what the scene was at six o'clock, when Mrs. Y. and I were walking in the early sun, on a spit of sand, to dry our feet, wet with the dewy grass which had been our carpet at breakfast ! There we were comparing the

impressions of our childhood about the story of Jesus, and the emotions and passions that history had excited in us: -and we saw, the while, the breaking up of the camp, and the leading forth of the camels which were soon to set us down on his native soil, and possibly near some of his haunts.—Our course was through thin pasture;—very thin, the ground being strewn with stones. The swelling hills bore some resemblance to the Scotch lowlands, but were more interrupted by water-courses. A few camels were grazing, and many flocks: a black encampment of Arabs was on a distant slope, and we met a woman here and there, leading the goats. To the east were the blue mountains which inclosed the Dead Sea. No one could tell the exact moment of crossing the frontier: but it was just after ten when we were assured that we had entered Palestine.

PART III.

PALESTINE AND ITS FAITH.

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven."—*Ecclesiastes*, iii. 1.

"First the blade, then the ear; after that, the full corn in the ear."—*Mark*, iv. 28.

"Dans tout le monde connu, vers l'ère chrétienne, et dans toutes les classes éclairées ou vulgaires de ce monde, on sembla ressentir au même instant le besoin de s'en remettre à un nouvel ordre d'idées, qui aurait pour première loi de s'addresser aux âmes beaucoup plus encore qu'aux esprits épuisés ; de rompre toutes les barrières religieuses établies entre les initiés et les profanes, et de dissiper de fond en comble, comme l'honneur en a appartenu au christianisme, un agrégation tumultueuse de déesses et de dieux qui ne laissaient privés de leur exemples et de leur protection aucun genre d'absurdités ni de vices."—*Jésus Christ et sa Doctrine*.—*Salvador*, i. p. 67.

"And here we cannot but by the way take notice of that famous and remarkable story of Plutarch's in his DEFECT OF ORACLES, concerning demons lamenting the death of the great PAN. In the time of Tiberius (saith he) certain persons embarking from Asia for Italy, towards the evening sailed by the Echinades, where, being becalmed, they heard from thence a loud voice calling one Thamous, an Egyptian mariner amongst them, and after the third time commanding him, when he came to the Palodes, to declare that THE GREAT PAN WAS DEAD."—*Cudworth*.—*Intellectual System*, I. ch. iv. p. 343.

PALESTINE AND ITS FAITH.

CHAPTER I.

ENTRANCE UPON THE HOLY LAND.—HEBRON.— BETHLEHEM.

THE first thought or impression which I remember as occurring on my entrance into the Holy Land was one of pleasure that it was so like home. When we came to towns, everything looked as foreign as in Nubia: but here, on the open hills, we might gaze round us on a multitude of familiar objects, and remember to whose eyes they were once familiar too. Never were the rarest and most glorious flowers so delightful to my eyes as the weeds I was looking at all this day; — the weeds of our hedges and ditches and fields; for I knew that in his childhood He must have played among them; and that in his manhood, he must have been daily familiar with them. If his family and that of John were related, and if the family of John lived at Hebron, the probability is strong that Jesus may have been in the very district through which we travelled this day. So general as were the habits of travel among the Hebrews, and so

often as the men had to come up to Jerusalem to the feasts, it is scarcely likely that relatives should not visit each other when so near as Jerusalem is to Hebron. So I already saw that vision which never afterwards left me while in Palestine,—of One walking under the terraced hills, or drinking at the wells, or resting under the shade of the olives: and it was truly a delight to think that besides the palm and the oleander and the prickly pear, he knew, as well as we do, the poppy and the wild rose, the cyclamen, the bindweed, the various grasses of the way-side, and the familiar thorn. This, and the new and astonishing sense of the familiarity of his teachings,—a thing which we declare and protest about at home, but can never adequately feel,—brought me nearer to an insight and understanding of what I had known by heart from my infancy, than perhaps any one can conceive who has not tracked his actual footsteps. But it is too soon to enter on this now.

We entered Palestine at the close of the rainy season, which ordinarily ends with March. A few drops of rain fell to-day, and the wind was cold. In about an hour from the frontier, we came upon a meagre bit of ploughing;—the first cultivation we had seen for some weeks. Then there was more, on a better soil, and some cross-ploughing, with a rude antique-looking plough, and a camel. The soil was reddish, and much encumbered with stones. The myriads of little locusts, or grasshoppers, which swarmed for miles, were beyond belief. They lay, like clusters of bees, on the grass, covering it for large spaces; and they filled the air, for about a foot above the ground, by jumping as we

passed. I may safely say I never saw so many living creatures in the same space before; for it seems to me that the gnats and frogs in an American swamp are not to be compared to these brown locusts for multitude.

We encamped about three o'clock, at a distance of four or five hours from Hebron. The place chosen was a level plot of weedy and stony ground among the hills which we were to cross in the morning. It was high ground, as we found by the cold: and it was not thought very safe, as we learned by the rumours of wild Bedoueens.—After service, some of the gentlemen explored the site, and were reasonably convinced that a town of considerable size had stood here. We had already passed one, called now El Arat, supposed to be the Aroer of Scripture; of which there remains a large building on a height, two standing columns, and mounds of stones. Here already was another: and for some days to come we were to be more and more impressed with wonder at the magnitude and number of the remains we had to pass. Nothing that I have seen in other countries gives an idea of such a thickly settled territory as this part of Palestine must once have been. From the frontier to Jerusalem, the towns must have been in sight of one another, I should think, all the way; and in some places, many must have been in view at once. And such fine-looking places too! No brick,—no mud,—no mere piles of rough stones from the hill sides: but square houses of hewn stone, with flat roofs, rising in tiers on the slope of a hill, or crowning its summit, or set within an angle of the terraced heights,

The remains round our encampment consisted of long lines of foundations, and numberless inclosure walls, almost razed to the ground ; and the overthrown columns of three edifices ; and the orifice of a substantially built well, with a hole in the rim, into which the pin of the covering-stone no doubt once fitted. There were caverns in the limestone rock, under some of the overthrown edifices. These caverns were once their vaults, but are now used to bed the goats. Such a site was the very place for scorpions ; and two were immediately found.

All the next day we continually saw gaping wells beside our path, and under every angle of the hills where they were likely to be kept filled. They were not now carefully covered, with a stone so massive as that the daughters of the patriarchs could not roll it away :—the country is too scantily peopled now for such care : but we could still see turbaned men sitting beside the opening ; and cattle crowding, and sheep and goats led to it.—Our way at first to-day lay over the hills where there were no visible tracks. These hill sides were very stony ; but they also abounded in shrubs and grass and weeds, whereon hung the pearly dew-drops which look so beautiful to those who come here by way of the Desert. It was all very like home,—like the wilder parts of England, except for our Arab train, and the talk about wild Bedoueens, for whom our scouts were carefully on the look-out.

This reminds me of a little adventure of this day which is not down in my journal, but which I clearly remember, from a certain novelty of sensation which attended it. The face-ache which I had had almost

from the day I left Cairo, had now increased to a degree which was really terrible. This morning it was worse than ever ; and I dismounted, partly from the restlessness of pain, and partly because I thought exercise might act as a counter-irritant. I was advised to try smoking ; and I found great relief for a short time. My own party passed me while I was looking better from this cause, and were therefore not anxious about me. But before half the long train had gone by, the pain came back ; and when Alee and the baggage camels passed, I could neither speak nor make a sign. I sank down on the wet ground fainting, just after the last had gone by. Still the rear-guard were to come. They passed without seeming to heed me. I was on sloping high ground which happened to command the bases of the hills for about a mile ; and with my dizzy sight I could see, opening my eyes from time to time, when the first of the troop went out of sight, and when half were gone, and, at length, when the last disappeared. Here I was alone indeed, on the hills of Judea. I did not expect to be long alone ; for I supposed that the wild Bedoueens would pounce upon me immediately : but I was too weak to feel frightened. I tried to rise several times ; but I could not stand. I do not know exactly how long it was, but it must have been a considerable time, before two armed Arabs came up, shouting, and running from different directions. They were of our escort. They had seen me in passing, and had run on for my camel, which presently appeared. They lifted me on ; but it was still some time before we could make any way. At last, I saw what encouraged me to an effort ; though indeed I had every motive

before in the danger I knew my poor Arabs to be in, so far from their comrades : but now there was hope in view. One of the gentlemen had stopped to arrange his gun : and he and his dragoman and driver were dismounted, within half a mile of us. In a little while, he had sent on for brandy, and made my camel kneel till I should be more fit to proceed. And then, of course, up came my kind friends, who could hardly be persuaded that it was nobody's fault. I felt throughout that I should be missed at lunch, and hardly before ; for, in a caravan like ours, everybody is supposed to be somewhere in the train ; and my friends were aware that I thought them more watchful over me than was at all necessary. As it was, I know better than any of them what it is to be alone on the wild hills of Judea.

About two hours short of Hebron, the shrubs congregated into thickets about our path, and we had white briar roses dancing on the sprays. Here the beautiful cyclamen began to peep out from under gnarled roots of old trees, or stones, or bunches of moss. From place to place, I henceforth saw this delicate and graceful flower, till we left the skirts of Lebanon for the shore of the Mediterranean. I was presently surprised to see Mr. E. promoted downwards from his camel to riding the Sheikh's horse. He told me that he had declined it repeatedly, but that "some men have greatness thrust upon them," and he found it best to accept his at last. This was our final day with Hussein. He was to be paid off in the evening ; and this was his way, we supposed, of making up matters before parting with the greatest man in Europe.

We had now begun to observe that cleared fields,

fenced with stone walls, were on our left hand. The ploughed fields had a deep yellow soil. And soon came vineyards and olive-grounds, where the shadows of the spreading trees were cast on a soil of deep red. The vines appeared very old; but we liked the Hebron wine which we afterwards tasted. In almost every vineyard was a tower, built of the stones which lay about;—a place for the watchman and the tools, I believe. And here we were already among those natural commentaries on the Gospel which we henceforth met with from day to day. Here, before us, men had “digged a wine-press, and built a tower.”

But on this spot the mind of the gazer is or ought to be carried back far beyond the time when there began to be vineyards here at all; to the time when the whole of this expanse of country was pasture land, and the flocks were on the hills, and the herdsmen, abiding in the field by night, worshipped the stars. Here, in those days, was that worship of the Sun whose traces we were to meet with throughout the rest of our journey. Here, upon the plain of Mamre, nothing was more natural than such worship to men who, living in tents in wide pasture lands, with the brilliant sky of the East overhead, saw sun and moon daily rise behind the mountains of Moab, and go down towards the sea, to let the dews descend and freshen the grass of the pastures. Here it was that these Sun-worshippers found among them the tents of a mighty prince* who did not worship sun or star. Here it was that Abraham fed his flocks both before and after his visit to Egypt. Here, as he sat under the terebinth tree,

in the plain, he could tell neighbour and guest of those wonderful works of Egyptian art of which we could now have told in the same place. Here he could astonish the shepherds of Mamre with descriptions of the marvels, and hints of the mysteries of the Pyramids: and with an account of the honours with which he had been treated at Memphis. Here it was that Sara died; and within view of where we now stood was the field leading up to a hill, wherein was a cave in which Abraham wished to bury his dead. There was the hill now, before us, with the cave in the midst of it, where the patriarch himself was afterwards laid.

Then, after several generations, other herdsmen came hither, who could tell more of Egypt than even Abraham. Hither came the sons of the generation who had come out of bondage. Years ago they had buried Miriam, not far to the south of this place: then they had seen Aaron go up Mount Hor to die: and now lately, Moses had disappeared from their eyes. They had not yet fulfilled the desire of Moses by becoming a nation,—a people with One God and a single faith. They were so little united yet by any national spirit as to be prepared for the cruel civil wars which took place as soon as they obtained arms; that is, under the Judges, presently after. Meantime, here they were, permitted by the Philistines to pasture their flocks, and learning the while, something of the arts of war and of civil life from the neighbours whom they hated and despised as unclean, because uncircumcised; ~~and the only uncircumcised people within their knowledge.~~ Then again, some generations later, after the barbarian wars of the times of the Judges, during which

the institutions of Moses appear to have been completely lost sight of, and the worship of Jehovah to have been only one item in a wide idolatry,—during which, in the historical language, “every man did that which was right in his own eyes;”—immediately after that dark time, three women passed this way,—unless Orpah had already turned back to yonder mountains, where her old home lay. Here at least passed old Naomi and Ruth; and greatly astonished would Ruth have been to be told that she was to be the great-grandmother of a king who should be crowned in the city then before her eyes; a king who should so sing as that the human race should echo his strains through all future time; and who should take the strong rock-fort of Jebus, some way to the north, and make of it a city so holy, as that its very name should be music for ever. Little did the gentle Ruth think of these things when she and Naomi passed this way.

Whether the greatest man, after Moses, in all Israel, Samuel, was ever here, I believe we are not told: but, as he lived in Ramah, and journeyed much, it is probable that he was. He, too, like Moses, was disappointed in his wisest wishes for this people; and he, like Moses, appears to have overrated their moral capacities. The people would have a king, and a very bad one! Here their second king was crowned, not as sovereign of Israel, but, as yet, of Judah only. Here the limited dignity was given, and here David lived for seven years and a half before he took the oath which made him king of all Israel. Hebron would not longer serve for his residence, as it was necessary for him to live where he could communicate easily with other parts

of his dominion, and especially where he could command the valley of the Jordan : he therefore took the rock-fort of Jebus, and fixed his abode upon Zion, whose praises he thenceforth celebrated as never city was celebrated by mortal man. Six of David's sons were born in Hebron. Of these, Solomon was not one, he being the son of Bathsheba whom, as we all know, David took to wife at Jerusalem ; but two of the six were Absalom, who here declared his rebellion, and Adonijah, who assumed the government while David lay dying, in order to exclude Solomon, the favoured son of Bathsheba. From the time of David's removal to Jerusalem, we hear little more of Hebron, except as one in the list of fortified cities. Once upon a time, however, the Idumæans came up from Petra, and took it ; and it was theirs till Judas Maccabæus drove them out. If this was the city "in the hill country in Judea" where the Baptist was born and reared, this is a strong interest connected with the place, and the latest, except for those who like to follow the career of the Crusaders.

I little thought ever to have felt any touch of the crusading spirit : but I was surprised by an impulse of it, on turning the shoulder of the hill which had hidden Hebron from us. The town looked very pretty, sloping down in the sun, on the two eminences on which it is built : but the most conspicuous thing in it is the mosque which covers the Cave of Machpelah. It was not the thought of this burial-place of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob which gave me a momentary ill-will to the Mohammedans. It was the thought of the devout John, who had for a disciple, for a time, a greater than himself. I was presently ashamed of the absurd and illiberal emotion ;

and, as I looked upon the minaret, felt that the Mohammedans had as much right to build over sacred places as the Empress Helena : though one must heartily wish they had all let it alone.—As soon as we thus came in view of the town, we sat down on the hill side, to rest and refresh ourselves, sending on the baggage, that our tents might be pitched on the quarantine ground, south of the town, in readiness for us.

We found our tents pitched on thick short grass, with the tombs of the Turkish cemetery behind us, and the town in full view in front. On the green, a company of Turkish soldiers was exercising. They looked mean,—one might say vulgar, in their European blue uniform : but the gentlemen said they went through their business very well.

There was time to look about us, before thinking of Hebron ; for there must be a negociation first with the Governor and the Doctor about our obtaining immediate pratique. While the tiresome dispute was proceeding, I sat at the tent door, much amused at the delight of our servants in buying fresh bread, oranges, wine, &c., after our long absence from all markets. The idlers who hung about us were a very handsome set of people : and in the town, we were yet more struck with the beauty of those we passed. There was something cheerful in meeting the women with faces uncovered, after the dark, dismal veiling we had been accustomed to so long. Among all the Jews we saw, I observed only one who had what we call the Jewish cast of countenance. Here, and at Jerusalem and elsewhere, we saw many Jews with fair complexions, blue eyes, and light hair. Such eyes I never saw, as both the blue

and the brown ; soft, large, noble eyes, such as bring tears into one's own, one knows not why. The form of the face was usually fine, and the complexions clear brown or fair :—the hair beautiful. The drawback was the frequency of scrofulous disease among them, which I observed particularly at Jerusalem. We went to the synagogue at Hebron, through the winding alleys of the Jew quarter. The Chief Rabbi being absent, we could not see the valuable MSS. said to be laid up here : but we saw one pretty sight, in the beautiful children who were at school in the synagogue. They were very few, —not more, I think, than ten or twelve ; and the building was small and mean. We looked into the house of the Chief Rabbi, being invited in by his cheerful, hospitable wife, who wished us to stay for coffee. We would not put her to this trouble : but presently we met her venerable husband ; and he pressed us all to go in and dine !—a party which would have filled his house ! He was a grey-bearded, picturesque-looking old man. Next, we were conducted to a glass-house,—of all odd places to see in Hebron ! I would recommend a Newcastle one in preference, as there the glass is not greenish and thin, and the articles made can stand upright. We thought here as before, however, that the Arabs are expert enough at manual arts, if they had fair play with tools and material.

The most interesting object in Hebron, the tombs of the Patriarchs, are of course inaccessible to Christians. Neither Jew nor Christian is permitted to set foot within the mosque. We walked nearly round it, and caught a view of the long flight of steps inside. We saw also the cistern where the worshippers wash ;

and that was all. It is believed that the Faithful themselves are not permitted to enter the Cave of Machpelah. Above the cave, a small mosque is built : and the mosque stands in a court, which is surrounded by the great circuit wall under which we walked. This massive stone wall is fifty or sixty feet high, and extends for about two hundred feet in length. It is needless to say that it effectually prevented our seeing anything beyond itself.

In returning to the tents, we passed the two pools, believed to be very ancient, from which the town draws its whole supply of water. These pools are filled by the rain merely : and one of them was very weedy and foul when we saw it. The other was clear. They are large and deep : the larger measuring, according to Dr. Robinson,* one hundred and thirty-three feet square, with a depth of nearly twenty-two feet. One of these is called the King's Pool, and is, according to tradition, the pool mentioned 2 Sam. iv. 12, as the scene of a horrible execution in David's time.

It was so cold this evening that we were glad of a charcoal fire in our tent. The Sheikh perceived this to be a good time for extorting money, by interfering with a lady's shelter for the night. He did not meddle with Mr. E., having had enough of him. He took his money very quietly ; and we congratulated Mr. E. on having done with him. But an urgent message came from two of the clergymen, begging Mr. E. to come and help them to get rid of the Sheikh. We thought our friend had already had too much put upon him, and saw no occasion for his being mixed up with

* Biblical Researches, II. 432.

further quarrels, when he had finished the general business ; and we dissuaded him from going. A second message came, however, so urgent as to summon him ; and there he found the Sheikh, pulling down the tent from over the heads of these gentlemen and the sister of one of them. He was going to seize both their tents, if they did not immediately pay some absurd demand which he had imagined for the occasion. Mr. E. obtained only an abatement of forty-four piastres : and the rest was paid at once, to enable the lady to go to rest.—In the morning, the Sheikh requested permission, and certainly with genuine anxiety, to shake hands with Mr. E. This was refused : and all that he could obtain by humble and persevering supplication, was permission to touch Mr. E.'s hand. He finally asked for a testimonial letter ; but was told that he had better say nothing about it, as we could report little favourable to him : whereupon he gave us such a salutation as we should have looked for if he had obtained what he wished. Mrs. Y. and I watched from the cemetery the process,—most tumultuous to-day,—of loading and setting off the camels on their return. They were delayed by the discovery of the theft of a pistol from one of the tents. The Governor was sent for ; and he ordained that the Sheikh should deduct the value of the pistol from his final pay ; and this was done ; and Sheikh Hussein and his train rode away. I have mentioned what adventure befel him on his return.

We had twenty miles to ride to-day,—to Bethlehem. When the horses were all appropriated, there remained some donkeys for the rest of us : and I had the smallest

that I ever mounted. After so many weeks on a camel, this was like riding a rat. But there was no fatigue in it, when we had once passed the very bad paved road near Hebron ; and the country was beautiful. The scenery was of the same character as yesterday ;—stony hills, tufted with shrubs ; fields of a deep yellow or red soil, ploughed to-day with bullocks ; many pools and picturesque old wells, sunk and weed-grown : but the trees were larger, the shrubs finer, and the wild flowers gayer and more profuse. None were more abundant than the cyclamen.

We forgot the tree of Abraham till we had passed the way to it too far to return : and we were not much concerned at it,—hardly supposing that the tree under which the Patriarch received the three visitants can be visible now. Two gentlemen of the company had gone ; and we proposed to be content with their report. We lunched under a spreading tree, in the shadow of a rock ; and as we threw our egg-shells about, little imagined what comfort we were providing for our two comrades in the rear. One of them was on foot ; so that both were at the mercy of the country people. Their guide played them false ; they were threatened and assailed, and had to fight and find their way as well as they could. While in some uncertainty, they arrived at this resting-place, saw our egg-shells, and knew that they were in the right road. The walker was dreadfully exhausted when they joined us at Bethlehem in the evening.

We met a company of pilgrims this morning,—very like the group in Eastlake's picture, only that they were leaving the Holy City, instead of hastening to it.

There were more women than men ; and they were very good-looking ; less travel-worn than could have been expected, after a pilgrimage first to Mekkeh, and then to Jerusalem. They were now on their way home ; some few on horses and asses, but the greater number on foot : perhaps five-and-twenty in all.—A little further on we came to a large khan, with a vast reservoir ; the resting-place of the pilgrims who come this way, and the watering-place of their beasts.

At the end of twenty miles from Hebron, we came upon a very fine view. On the ridge of a hill before us rose the convent of St. Elias, which we knew to be almost within sight of Jerusalem. A valley lay on our left hand, from which sloped hills whose recesses were wooded with olive groves. High up one of these hills, and in the midst of the olive groves, was a village,—one of the handsome stone built villages of Palestine, on which the setting sun was now casting its last golden gleam. To our right lay Bethlehem. To our right we turned ; for news met us at this corner that we could be lodged in the Latin convent at Bethlehem. We descended through the narrow streets of the village, and passed along the road, half-way up the rocks, to the convent, which stands on a point nobly commanding the eastern plain, as far as the hills which inclose the Dead Sea. It was too dusk now to see much of this ; and we left all research till the morning.—We were kindly received by the friars, and had good rooms and thoroughly clean beds. There was no annoyance whatever but gnats. The moon shone in splendidly all night : a great blessing to me ; for I was not yet sufficiently at ease to sleep. I have a pleasant recollection

of that night, however,—the moon shining full in at the high window, and showing me the ample spaces of that lofty and large apartment; and the certainty being before me of seeing to-morrow the fields where Ruth gleaned among the maidens of Boaz, and the pastures where a shepherd-boy once tended his father's flocks,—now seeking smooth stones for his sling among the brooks, and now delighting himself with that young song which was to grow divine, and to become the worship of future ages and nations,—in the islands of the Southern ocean, and the cathedrals of Europe, and among the forests of the western world. It was strange to think what the Psalms of David have become, and then to remember that in the morning we should see the very valleys and hill-sides where he led his sheep, and tried his young voice, with the echoes for his chorus.

On that morrow (Wednesday, March 31st) we had these anticipated pleasures,—of seeing the face of the country where Ruth and her descendant David were out in the fields; but we now began to experience that pain,—so much greater than can be anticipated,—to one's cherished associations, which is the birth of superstition at home and on the spot. We hear much complaint from travellers of their pain from the superstition on the spot; but little or nothing of the perplexity or disturbance from the superstition they have left behind or brought with them. The superstition I refer to is the worship of the Letter of the Bible, to the sacrifice of its spirit. As to the comfort and pleasure of the traveller in the Holy Land, it may truly be said that “the letter killeth, but the spirit maketh alive.”

I had opportunity to see the difference between those who were in bondage and those who were free. One of the best things that Coleridge ever said was that our idolatry would be succeeded by bibliolatry. When I saw abroad, as I continually see at home, the curse of this bibliolatry, I thought it hard to say which was the worst of the two. In idolatry, Christian or pagan, there is always some true idea involved, however much corruption may be associated with it: but in the awful error of mistaking the Records of the origin of Judaism and Christianity for the messages themselves, there seems no redeeming consideration. The error of bibliolatry is the more gratuitous of the two. There is no declaration in the Records themselves that they are anything more than records: and if the writers could have foreknown that the hearts and minds which ought to be occupied with the history and the doctrine would be enslaved by a timid and superstitious regard to the wording of the records, they would have been as much shocked at the anticipation as any of us can be at the sight of it.—We all know, as well as Coleridge did, that this is only a temporary form of an evil which took other shapes before, and will take other shapes again. We know that there was far more freedom of religious imagination, reason, argument, and, I may say, knowledge among our Protestant divines a century ago than there is now. This corruption of bibliolatry has so increased upon us, our faithless and irreverent timidity has so grown upon us, even in that time, that it would be an act of great courage in divines of our day to publish what divines of a century ago were honoured for publishing. It is difficult now for philosophers to

make known,—in England, for the incubus presses chiefly there,—what can be proved to be scientifically true, in geology and some other directions; and it is much more difficult for philosophers and scholars to make known what can be proved to be historically true or false. Of course, our generation loses terribly by this, both in knowledge and in health of mind. But the evil will pass: and, though it is to be feared that it will only pass into some new form of idol homage, we will hope that men may ere long lift up their heads, and use their powers freely, as those should do who believe themselves sons of God, and heirs of Christian liberty, and not slaves or infants under the bondage of the Law or the Letter.

No one at home could feel all this more strongly than I did before I went to the East: and I think no one who has felt it at home can help being full of sorrow and pity there for those who go through the scenes of Palestine with the timid heart, and narrow, anxious mind of superstition. Instead of “looking before and after,” and around them in the broad light of historical and philosophical knowledge, which would reveal to them the origin and sympathy and intermingling of the faiths of men, so that each may go some way in the interpretation of the rest;—instead of having so familiarised themselves with the wants and tendencies of men as to recognise in successive faiths what is derived and what is original;—instead of being warned that any faith becomes corrupted within a certain length of time by the very zeal of its holders; instead of having the power of setting themselves back to the time when Christ lived and spoke, so as to see and hear him

as if he lived and spoke at this day, our travellers may be seen,—even clergymen of the Church of England,—getting leave from the Bishop of Jerusalem to carry wax candles in Passion Week in the processions in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and making obeisances to the priests, candle in hand. Travellers may be observed throughout doing one of two things;—over-looking, more or less consciously,—the incompatibilities of the Scriptural narrative,—the absolute contradictions which can by no means be reconciled ; or so fastening their whole attention upon one narration, to the exclusion of the parallel ones, as to escape the necessity of the recognition of variance. I met with one devout pilgrim who was actually unaware of any incompatibilities in the different narratives of the birth and infancy of Jesus ; and who declared, previous to inquiry, that there could be none, because—not the facts or doctrine—but the narrative was the Word of God ! I saw repeated instances of a grovelling superstition, a formal observance of days and places, which made me wonder whether, if the groves and altars of Baal and Ashtaroth had now been standing in their old places, there would have been much to choose between such homage paid to them and to the actual holy sites of Palestine.—How different is the truer reverence of those who go enlightened by knowledge, and animated by a higher faith !—who believe that the history of man is truly the Word of God : and that the reason why the gospel is especially called so is because those Glad Tidings are the most important event in the history of man. How infinitely venerable to them are the great religious Ideas which they know to have

been the guiding lights of men from the remotest past, and which Christ presented anew, purified and expanded ! What an exquisite pleasure it is to stand where Jesus stood, and look around upon the old faiths and sectarian tenets of the world, and bring forth from them all a faith and hope which should, notwithstanding dreadful corruptions, elevate mankind through many future ages!—to have insight into the sacred mysteries of Egypt, and the national theology and Law of Sinai, and the ritual morality of the Pharisees, and the philosophical scepticism of the Sadducees, and the pure and peaceable and unworldly aspirations of the Essenes, and to see how from all these together come the ideas, and from the unseen world the spirit, of the religion which Jesus taught ! While the devotee looks for traces of his footsteps, the disciple finds everywhere traces of his spirit. While the devotee listens timidly to traditions, the disciple hears everywhere the echoes of his living voice. While the devotee pores over the text of the narrative, not daring even to bring parts to bear on each other, which may throw light on the whole, the loving disciple so opens his entire mind and heart as to perceive the Holy One with all his powers ; —with his understanding receiving the doctrine,—with his hope accepting the promises,—with his conscience adoring the spirituality,—and with his imagination accompanying the Teacher in all his haunts,—in the wilderness, and in the Temple courts, and by the shores of the Lake. On the spot, one hardly believes that it can be the same faith that takes one man through the land, holy guide-book in hand, with the timid, tentative gait of the devotee, and another man,

confiding in his guiding instincts, with the free, joyous step of the disciple who has found his Lord.

As for the superstition of the region,—the Christian superstition,—I need say nothing in advance of the pain which it causes. The merest mention of what was shown to us is enough. I do not think that travellers can be right in avoiding the Christian establishments in Palestine. The spectacle answers the same purpose as the reading of the Spurious Gospels. The spectacle and the reading are both painful; but they are very useful and enlightening, and stimulate to a great deal of wholesome thought. Feeling thus, I saw everything that any one offered to show me,—except the mummeries of Easter Week in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. From that exhibition I did shrink; and I staid at home while two English clergymen and a lady were carrying wax-candles in the way I mentioned.—At Bethlehem was our introduction to the monkish sights of Palestine.

In the morning, a friar showed us the church, built, as every one knows, over the cave of the Nativity. It is a handsome church, with departments for Greek, Latin and Armenian worship.—The crypt could not be entered then, as mass was going on:—and curious was the effect, as seen from the entrance of the grotto, of the chaunting congregation crowded into a subterranean cave, all yellow light, and smoke, and closeness. It was in these underground places that St. Jerome lived and wrote: and this was a real interest belonging to the place.—When we returned to the crypt, after mass, we saw the silver star which is laid in the pavement in the precise spot of the supposed birth of Jesus;

and the recess where Joseph waited for the news, and the corner where a marble manger has replaced the original one ; (for even the friars did not pretend that this was the original manger :) and the place where the Magi presented their offerings : and, at some distance, the cave where the Virgin lived for some days after her recovery, and where, her milk becoming deficient, she mixed the lime of the sides with water, and so by drinking it, obtained a supply ; and then other caves where she had lived.—As to these grottoes which are supposed to have been the scene of most of the sacred events, Maundrell has some remarks which may suffice, once for all.

“ I cannot forbear to mention in this place,” says Maundrell, “ an observation which is very obvious to all who visit the Holy Land, viz., that almost all passages and histories related in the gospels are represented by them that undertake to show where everything was done, as having been done most of them in grottoes ; and that, even in such cases where the condition and circumstances of the actions themselves seem to require places of another nature. Thus, if you would see the place where St. Anne was delivered of the blessed Virgin, you are carried to a grotto ; if the place of the Annunciation, it is also a grotto ; if the place where the blessed Virgin saluted Elizabeth ; if that of the Baptist’s or our Saviour’s Nativity ; if that of the agony, or that of St. Peter’s repentance, or that where the Apostles made the creed, or this of the Transfiguration ; all these places are also grottoes. And, in a word, wherever you go, you find almost everything is represented as done underground. Certainly, grottoes

were anciently held in great esteem, or else they could never have been assigned, in spite of all probability, for the places in which were done so many various actions. Perhaps it was the hermit-way of living in grottoes, from the fifth century downwards, that has brought them ever since to be in so great reputation.”—That this hermit-way of living is the antecedent of the fact, there can be little doubt: but the practice and the fact certainly existed before the time of the Empress Helena, for she was shown holy grottoes, just as we were.—Of course, the Innocents were buried in grottoes too. We were shown in this crypt, an altar under which some of them were laid.

When we went to look abroad from the convent garden, we were beset by Bethlehemites asking alms, or offering for sale mother-of-pearl shells, carved with Nativity subjects; and bowls, inkstands, &c., made of some black substance which the people declared to be the hardened mud of the Jordan.—When we escaped from these people, it was very interesting to look out over the valley, so familiar to Ruth and David: and there was one spot, under the eastern hill, an inclosure planted with olives, which the friars declared to be the field where the shepherds were abiding when they heard the announcement of “peace on earth, and good will to men.”

The friars are cheerful, kind-hearted people. We saw them giving dinner to the boys of the convent, who were merrily enjoying an abundant meal.—We left them some time before noon, to proceed first to the Convent of St. Elias, on the hill before us. We passed the tomb of Rachel, and entered the Convent of

St. Elias, where there was nothing to see but the ordinary decorated altar, with the ordinary wretched pictures over it ;—in this case, of Elijah and Elisha.—Outside, however, there was something really interesting. Looking eastwards, we caught our first view of the Dead Sea, whose blue waters showed themselves in an interval of the hills.

Soon after, we saw, on the opposite northern ridge, a line of walls which looked so insignificant that some of our company were unaware at first what it was. Mr. E. said to me, “ You know that is Jerusalem.” I was not disappointed, as some were ; for I knew that the most imposing first view was from the north, and the least from the south. Still, it was now a mere line of wall : and next, only a single dome appeared above it. But presently, when we could overlook the valley which lay between us and it, it became very striking ; and soon, it exceeded all my expectations. The depth and steepness of Mount Zion now appeared ; and it was not wonderful that the people of Jebus sent that scornful message to king David,* that their lame and blind should defend their fort against him. Next, we were struck with the depth of the ravines of Siloam and Hinnom, and their clustering red rocks ; and then, there was the long vast slope of Olivet beyond. From the valley, we ascended a winding, steep, rocky road, which was to lead us in by the Jaffa gate. I was on foot, and lagged behind, that I might not lose by disturbance any feature of the scene. But I believe no one spoke. We all felt that it was such a moment as we should never know again. The black cupola of the

* 2 Samuel, V. 6. 8.

tomb of David was conspicuous ; and above all, the great dome and surrounding buildings of the Mosque of Omar, crowning the summit of Moriah, where ancient pilgrims used to see the glittering roof of the Temple. The hill of Moriah is so much lower than Zion as to surprise those who had read that there was once a height of 480 feet from the Temple walls to Kedron running below : a visible proof, if true, of the loftiness of Mount Zion. Of course, the Valley of Jehoshaphat, with Kedron in its depths, was hidden from us by the intervening city and heights : but we saw more and more of Olivet, swelling up and away beyond the city and the ravines. The convent of the Ascension was conspicuous on its summit : and lower down, the chapel on the spot where Jesus sat when he uttered the doom of the city.

We entered by the Jaffa gate, and wound through steep, narrow, ill-paved streets, where the echo of the horses' feet between the high walls struck upon the ear, through all the beating of the heart which told us that we were in Jerusalem.

CHAPTER II.

ELEMENTS OF THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF THE HEBREWS AT THE TIME OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

BEFORE going in search of the haunts of Jesus, it seems to me desirable to review, however slightly, the progress which religion had made since the great events which dated from Sinai. This is necessary in giving a faithful account of my travels, because I found it indispensable on the spot to the true understanding of my journey. In order to see the scene of the life of Jesus at all with his eyes, it was necessary to understand, as far as possible, his knowledge and his views: and in order to understand these, it was indispensable to consider what were the elements of the religious life of the time. If I could convey any idea of the advantage, in this point of view, of studying, first Egypt, and then the Sinai peninsula, instead of going straight from the theological atmosphere of home into the sacred places of Palestine, I cannot but think that much irreverent dogmatism, and much idolatrous superstition would be recognised for what they are, and would give place to ideas and a temper more befitting the disciples of Jesus. We all know something of the beneficent power of knowledge at home, though our knowledge there can be derived only from books.

We all know, in ourselves, or by observation of others, how entirely superstitious, and therefore how nearly worthless is our religion, as long as we ignorantly suppose that all the events and arrangements narrated in the Bible are perfectly singular: a state of things ordained, down to the minutest particulars, for the sake of the “peculiar people,” and in no respects paralleled elsewhere: and then, how the value of our faith rises, and our character of mind rises with it, when divines worthy of their office, and other learned instructors show us how the religion arose, and passed “from strength to strength,” among circumstances and arrangements which were common to all men of the time and region. When it opens upon the young student that a part of the earliest traditions in Genesis are of Egyptian origin; and that the covenant of circumcision was not with Abraham alone, but that the rite was practised from a time unknown by all the Orientals, excepting only the Philistines; and that though the Law originated with Moses, after an Egyptian model, and therefore bore his name, it was, in its full extent, the work of many centuries; and that the books, commonly called of Moses, were therefore not written by him, nor ever asserted or assumed in early days to be so, whatever amount of the material of them might have been furnished by him; and that the calf-idol, and the sacrifices, and feast-days, and the structure of the tabernacle, were of Egyptian derivation; and that the practice of carrying a tabernacle was not peculiar to the Hebrews, and so on:—when the young student learns these things from religious scholars and their works at home, he finds, if he be ingenuous, a

strong light cast upon his faith, as well as an immense relief afforded to his religious affections. He is set free from perplexity and superstition about the apparatus employed in the conveyance of religious ideas, and he is at liberty for the contemplation of the ideas themselves, and for admiration of the process by which the loftiest and holiest influences which have operated on the human race have issued from the ordinary circumstances and habitudes of life. For one instance, he honours Moses infinitely more for having transcended "the wisdom of the Egyptians," and dared to lay open their mysteries, while employing for his purposes the religious associations which the Hebrews had derived from them, than if it had been true, as the ignorant naturally and perniciously suppose, that the apparatus and external arrangements were as essential a part of the Mosaic religion as the doctrine that Jehovah was the sole God of the Hebrews. Apart from the apparatus, and only passing through the ritual to the minds of the people, how sublime is the doctrine! But how it sinks when it is supposed to be given on the same terms with devices about the red heifer and the shew-bread, and the priests' garments, and the fringes and rings of the tabernacle!

In the same manner, but in an immeasurably higher degree, is the progressive faith of the Hebrews, and that of the first Christians, enhanced by the lights which travel concentrates upon the spot of their origin and expansion. Books of Biblical scholarship,—those which are the work of free and enlightened and earnest minds,—are a great blessing at home;—the greatest, except the Book itself: and, moreover, they are an indispensable

preparative for the benefits of travel : but, as instructors, how low they sink while one is contemplating an Egyptian tomb, or looking abroad from the heights of Horeb ! The monumental volumes of Egypt teach in a day what can never be learned in libraries at home : and in the Desert, “Truth springs out of the earth, and righteousness looks down from the heaven” which overhangs Sinai. And these lights accumulated as we went ; and we found what it was to carry our Egyptian associations into the Desert ; and thence, enriched again by the fruits of the Wandering, into Palestine. As, in Palestine, our main interest is its being the abode of Jesus, I gave comparatively little attention to any mere localities of more ancient events, but endeavoured to carry clearly in my mind the religious history of the Hebrews up to the time of Christ, in order to a better understanding of his own, and a more thorough realisation of his presence in the haunts which, for his sake, we sought. A brief retrospect of that kind here is necessary to a faithful account of what we saw.

The first thing evident in the history, after the arrival of the Hebrews in the Promised Land, is the utter apparent failure for the time of their leader's aim and hope for them. His hope had been, and the aim of their Desert life, to keep them pure from Egyptian popular superstitions on the one hand, and the planetary worship of Canaan on the other : but they were subject to both for some centuries after their arrival in Palestine ;—avowedly till the completion of the Law, and the full establishment of the ritual after the time of Josiah ; and unconsciously, in several

doctrines and many habits of thought, to the very last. The golden calf at Sinai was not the only one by very many. Jehovah was still considered, at times if not always, the chief God of the Hebrews ; and this pre-eminence was asserted by the consecration of golden calves to him exclusively, which indicated him to be the Amun, or king of the gods to this semi-Egyptian people. These calves were set up at Dan and Bethel, and on many a high place between, in the time of Jeroboam,—three generations after the day when David brought the ark into Jerusalem, bidding its gates be lifted up, that the King of Glory might come in.—And as for the Planetary idolatry, the people not only fell, immediately after their arrival, into the worship of the oriental Apollo and Diana, but the horses of the Sun, and chariots of the Sun, were set up as consecrated images at the very entrance of the House of Jehovah, up to the time of Josiah.*

Another failure was as to the design of Moses to have but one place of general worship. For this purpose, he had made one tabernacle ; and, as he hoped, secured unity of object of worship by giving them the Ark. But, while the Ark remained at Kirjath-jearim, there were many places where the priests set up altars of sacrifice, and officiated at them : and this went on long after David's great act of taking Jebus, and inclosing and building upon Mount Zion, and bringing in the ark to sanctify his royal city. How painful it is to this hour to remember that generations after David had sung his exulting praises of Zion and the sanctuary, in strains which fire the coldest hearts

* A History of the Hebrew Monarchy, p. 153, note. (London: Chapman.)

among us, his people should have been sacrificing in preference to the Sun and Moon, or consulting the oracles of Jehovah at Shiloh or Nôb or elsewhere, or bowing before little images at home, while the Temple of Jehovah, with the ark in its Holy Place was set on a hill in the midst of them ! David would rather have been a door-keeper in that House than have dwelt feasting in the tents of the worshippers of the groves. Solomon's marriage to an Egyptian wife, and Jeroboam's residence at the court of Shishak, after Shishak's conquest of Jerusalem, were circumstances unfavourable to the Mosaic faith. The priesthood was not till long afterwards appropriated solely to the Levites. They might be preferred, but they were not the only eligible persons for the office : nor were they restricted to serve at the central altars of Jehovah, but officiated in private dwellings, using images. There was thus no body of persons at that time whose business it was to take charge of the honour of Jehovah and the religious interests of the people : and these depended mainly therefore on the mind and character of the king for the time being. Under the devout David, Jehovah was honoured, and his Ark set on the holy hill. Under Solomon, the national God was so far honoured as to have a splendid temple erected to him : but there was nowhere a grosser idolator than the sovereign who did this work :—a weak, uxorious man, who had an Egyptian wife, and concubines who worshipped the stars.—As there was at that time no exclusively Levitical priesthood to take charge of the national religion, nor any effectual centralisation of worship, so there

were, as far as we can learn, no imperative and universal observances. There was certainly no due observation of the Sabbatical year, nor of the Passover. It appears that the Passover was never known to have been celebrated till after the first propounding of the complete Law, in the time of Josiah.* Two centuries and a half after the reign of Rehoboam, the people were worshipping the brazen serpent;—one of the commonest objects of pagan idolatry. Hezekiah “brake it in pieces;” “for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it.”† In short, there was, till the days of Josiah, no centralisation by which the people could be kept steady to any belief or practice: and they, being what they were, and in the midst of such a world as lay about them, could be kept in any degree of order by no other means.

When Moses had been first compelled to lower his aspirations for them, and to give them, instead of moral commandments, a ritual from which might emanate a moral influence, he had done all that they were then capable of receiving. He probably saw, what some of the wise now believe, that the fatal fault of the most refined Egyptian religion,—the religion of the Mysteries,—was that it was too much a worship of the Mind, and too little of the Heart: and most strenuous were his efforts so to reveal God to the Hebrews as to fix on Him their hope and fear, and, as a national god, their trust and love. His own self-devotion appears to show that the heart-element did lie in the faith he propounded; and what it expanded to when it met with such a soul as David’s, his divine songs fully show. But there were

* 2 Kings, XXIII. 21—23.

+ 2 Kings, XVIII. 4.

not among the Hebrews many such hearts as David's,—quickened and expanded as his was by his glorious faculty of Imagination and its kindred powers: and the appeals of pagan worship to their passions were too much for their forces of either mind or heart. Under its permanent seductions, drawing them incessantly out of the path of allegiance and sobriety, there was needed some stronger central attraction and established compulsion than for some ages existed. With no records but floating traditions, and perhaps scattered documents; with no exclusive and limited priesthood, no compulsory celebrations which should include them all, no one spot solely consecrated to sacrifice and worship, and no pretence at last of preserving purity of race, it is no wonder that "every man did that which was right in his own eyes;" and that many eyes were much in the dark about what it was right to do. The confusion and demoralisation were perhaps worst in the times of the Judges. In the kingly institution a centralising influence might seem to have been found; though the wise Samuel was too clear-sighted to think so.—A king supported by a priestly caste, as in the Egyptian theocracy, was powerful for the objects needed now: but the Hebrew theocracy was one which did not admit of such a Priest-king as the Egyptians had: and the Jewish king could act on the religious mind of his people only through the *prestige* of his civil office and his personal qualities: and then, as the history shows, for one true worshipper, like David and Josiah, they had many idolators, or intellectual men, like Solomon, who played fast and loose with several gods. It was not in the time of the Judges

alone that “every man did that which was right in his own eyes.”

In this long interval, however, between the death of Moses and the great centralisation which took place in the time of Josiah, the name and worship of Jehovah were never lost; were never, indeed, so loftily honoured afterwards as now. At a future time, the people became united in the worship of Jehovah; but their formal homage, growing drier from age to age under the pressure of the priesthood, never rivalled the devotional sentiment of the prophets, and those whom they inspired. It is in no view diverging from our subject here, to give in the words of another a short account of the function of the Hebrew Prophets in the times prior to the establishment of an exclusive Levitical priesthood; that is, in times when it was hoped that the guidance, by the Prophets, of the religious sentiment of the nation would secure its religious fidelity.

“Ancient Polytheism,” says our author,* “was always tolerant of collateral polytheistic systems; and he who venerated numerous deities was naturally ready to believe that other gods existed, unknown to him, yet equally deserving of worship. The pure monotheistic faiths, on the contrary, whether of Zoroaster, Moses or Mohammed, have been all marked by an intolerance which in that stage of the world could not be separated from the interests of truth; and on this cardinal point the unity of Israel was to depend. A noble and pure soul looked with disgust on the foul errors entangled with Canaanitish and Syrian superstitions; and in maintaining the exclusive honour of the national god of

* A History of the Hebrew Monarchy, p. 28.

Israel,—the Lord and Creator of Heaven and Earth,—was guilty of no such mean-spirited sectarianism as might fairly be imputed to one who contended for a Neptune against an Apollo, an Adonis against a Neith. The prophet of Jehovah was in fact striving for the pure moral attributes of God,—for holiness against impurity, majesty and goodness against caprice and cruelty,—for a God whose powers reached to the utmost limits of space and time, against gods whose being was but of yesterday, and whose agencies thwarted one another. Nevertheless, the Hebrew creed was not monotheistic, in the sense of denying the *existence* of other gods. It rather degraded them into devils, and set the omnipotence of Jehovah into proud contrast with their superhuman, yet limited might, than exploded them as utterly fabulous.”

“The prophets* must on no account be confounded with the ‘priests.’” . . . “Priests must no doubt have been all but coeval with the existence of the nation; and at this time they probably lived in knots at particular towns, where certain sacerdotal families happened to have multiplied, since the character of the priest was essentially *hereditary*. His business was one of routine,—to sacrifice, or to burn incense; to light lamps, to offer shewbread, or perform some other of the ceremonies with which ancient religion abounded. It is a striking fact, that during all Samuel’s administration no one ventured to remove the Ark from Kirjath-jearim; nor do the priests seem to have been concerned to take charge of it. But ‘*the men* of Kirjath-jearim sanctified Eleazar, son of Abinadab, to keep

* A History of the Hebrew Monarchy, p. 31.

the Ark of Jehovah ;' and under the care of the same house it is found in the beginning of David's reign at Jerusalem (2 Samuel, vi. 3). This however is but one out of numerous proofs that the ceremonial system was one which very gradually grew up, and was as yet exceedingly immature.—Except where lands had been attached to some sanctuary, the priest must have lived by the sacrifices and other offerings, and only in very rare cases exercised, or sought to exercise, any influence which can be called spiritual. But no man became a *prophet* by birth : he needed some call for the office, with exercise and teaching ; nor did the prophets often concern themselves with mere ceremonies, although they occasionally introduced symbolic actions of their own, suited to impress the public senses. Their characteristic emblem was some musical instrument, and their highest function to compose and sing solemn psalms of religious worship or instruction. Unlike to the Minstrel of the Greeks, who devoted his powers to flatter chieftains and amuse the crowd ; or to the later lyrast, who composed laudatory odes for pecuniary recompense ;—more like in some respects to a patriotic Tyrtaeus, or to a Welsh bard ;—the Hebrew prophet differed essentially in this, that his first and great aim was to please and honour God, in faith that from obedience to Him the highest good of man would assuredly follow."

The time arrived when these spiritual leaders, the Prophets, gave place to the Priests ; an order of men of whom nothing has been thus far told which leads us to believe that they were of great importance as a caste. Their genealogy was not pure : they were dispersed

about the country, serving at different altars, and even in private families. During the reign of Ahab and Jezebel, they lived side by side with the priests of Baal, against whom the prophets wrought to their utter destruction. It was a remarkable state of things when Elijah was at Mount Carmel, ordaining the slaughter of the priests of Baal at the river Kishon, and the priests of Jehovah were living quietly at Jerusalem, seeing the temples of the two gods standing within view of each other, and themselves associating with the priests of the Sun. It was in the time of Athaliah, as we all know, that this state of things came to an end. It was then that Jehoiada put down at once the queen and the false god, and established the priesthood in that position which it thenceforward maintained, whenever the nation held up its head.—There is no need to say anything here of the Hebrew priesthood; for almost everything that has been said of the Egyptian will answer as an exact description. When it became a Levitical priesthood, a hereditary caste, including all the higher professions, and subsisting by exclusive intermarriage, it was altogether Egyptian, except that it was not necessary that the king should be chosen out of this caste, or should pass through it.—Up to this time, and yet more remarkably afterwards, there was constant and abundant intercourse between the Hebrews and Egypt. Whether the monarchs were at war or in alliance, whether the Egyptians came up against Jerusalem, or to march through into Assyria, they were often in Palestine; and there seems to have been a pretty constant influx of Jews into Egypt, till they had, as we know, five cities, and a great Temple

to Jehovah in the very place where Moses had sat to learn of the priests of Egypt. It is no wonder, therefore, that the Egyptian and Jewish priesthoods bore an almost exact resemblance to each other, nor that we find everywhere Egyptian elements in the faith and philosophy of the Hebrews.

It is believed by the learned that during two centuries and a half after the full assumption of power by the priesthood under Jehoiada, the four first books of the Pentateuch were probably compiled from existing documents and other means of knowledge: and that, finally, the book of Deuteronomy was written, and brought out with the others, in the time of Josiah,* to work the greatest change in the religious condition of the Hebrews which had happened since they left Mount Sinai. The books of the Law were then found in the Ark; in the Ark which is declared to have been empty at preceding dates: and a multitude of particulars in the books themselves prove, as biblical scholars have shown, that they could not have been reduced to their present form before the dates here assigned. For the consternation of King Josiah, and the sensation excited among the people by the denunciations against idolatry,—especially the prevalent idolatry of the country,—we need only refer to the history. Our business with the event is to mark its effect on the Religious Thought of the nation.

From this time, the Hebrews became much more steady in their allegiance to Jehovah. They had now a recognised caste, to take charge of their religious concerns; an established ritual, which occupied their

* A History of the Hebrew Monarchy, ch. ix.

thoughts and feelings, and trained them in habits of observance; and they had a central place of meeting,—a type of unity—before their eyes. But under this system, though idolatrous vagaries were repressed, the religious life of the people died out; as religious vitality ever does die out from the hour when it becomes the charge of a priesthood. From this time till Christ arose to free it from its trammels, and revive its life, the religious sentiment of the nation wasted away under the bondage of the Law, the formality of the priesthood, and the sectarianism which inevitably springs up where the administration of religion is appropriated by any body of men. This was the great crisis in the mind of the Hebrew people,—whatever crises remained for their fortunes. Between the Exodus and the coming of Christ, there was no other point of time which so affected their religious state. Hitherto they had hovered among the idolatries of the surrounding nations, and had largely intermingled with some of them by marriage; so that for centuries they had been a mongrel people. Now, all this was changed. The Prophets had almost died out: the Priests and Levites had risen: the Law included the whole people within a well-guarded fold: and henceforth they were to be “a peculiar people,” as exclusive as they had hitherto been vagrant and careless. In this exclusiveness they immediately began to harden; and what point of hardness of pride, and legality of worship they had reached by the time of Christ’s coming, his history shows.

Now that there was a Law,—a complete, tangible, recorded Law,—that body of men called Lawyers arose. Before this time, they were never heard of. Now they

began to study, interpret and expound the Law, and, in proportion as the nation became consolidated, they rose to fill the important place which they held when Christ stood in the Temple, six centuries after this consolidation of written memorials, and perhaps oral tradition from the time of Moses downwards, into a system of Statute Law.—This origin of Rabbinism seems to have as much connexion with Egypt as the origin of the Hebrew faith, ritual and literature. As the author of the history above quoted says,* “Ever since the reign of Uzziah the intercourse with Egypt had been steadily on the increase; and the colonies of Jews and Israelites there were so considerable, that the absentees in Egypt and the exiles in Assyria are often spoken of in one breath (which indeed we have seen in Isaiah) as though co-ordinate and almost commensurate. Although Egyptian art perhaps was sinking, Egyptian learning must have been at its height in Isaiah’s day; and wealthy Jews established in that country, where all the trials before a judge are said to have gone on in writing, would necessarily gain more definite ideas of the value of a complete written body of statutes accessible to all. Communication with the exiles in the cultivated cities of Assyria must have had the same tendency.” Here again we have that conjunction which, in regard to religious matters, Moses so dreaded, and from which dread he made of his people a Desert tribe for so long;—the intermingling of the Hebrews with the Egyptians on the one hand, and their eastern neighbours on the other; and, according to our author, the Thought of these different peoples was probably

* A History of the Hebrew Monarchy, p. 319.

infused into the Law of the Hebrews, no less than into their faith and their traditions. He says,* "In the new school there must have been very various minds; some disposed to heathenism and Egyptian mysteries, others simple as Moses; yet all eager for Levitical aggrandisement."

As it is the religious life of the nation that we are now glancing back upon, it is not necessary to say more of the Captivity than that when the Remnant returned, they immediately placed themselves under their own Law and ordinances, under the protection of Persia. They sought their old homes, on their arrival, and provided necessaries for their families, and then, a month after their return, assembled at Jerusalem, reared an altar among the ruins of the "beautiful House" which Solomon had built, offered sacrifices, and kept the feast of Tabernacles.—Then followed the rebuilding of the Temple, and the return of Ezra, the priest and scribe, to look to the thorough re-establishment of the Law and Worship of his people. He annulled the marriages with heathens which had taken place during the interval of uncertainty and depression; and almost before his work of ecclesiastical purification was completed, Nehemiah arrived to look to the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem. While Nehemiah was superintending this work, Ezra finished his revisal of the sacred books, and settled the Old Testament canon. He changed the text from the old Hebrew to the Chaldee, which was now more intelligible to the people.† The Samaritans not choosing to adopt the change, the old

* A History of the Hebrew Monarchy, p. 319.

. † Palestine, Kitto, p. 653.

character was henceforth called the Samaritan text.—The language itself having become strange to the returned Jews, they needed an interpretation: and in order to give them one, that solemn public reading was held which is recorded in the 8th chapter of Nehemiah, when Ezra the Scribe and his coadjutors “read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.”

And now occurs a very interesting period in the religious life of the Jews:—the rise of the sect of the Pharisees. At what time precisely they became a sect, there is no saying now. Josephus, who was one of them, only knew that they existed long before his time. They certainly arose after the promulgation of the Law; and probably very soon after; their particular function,—of delivering the Oral Law,—being indicated by the written Law coming into common use. The main doctrine of the Pharisees was that Aaron had handed down an oral law, and set of traditions, to accompany the written Law: and that the traditions were the more important and valuable of the two, and to be used for the interpretation of the written Law. As they professed to hold these traditions, there would have been hardly any limits to their power, if their claims had been fully and universally admitted—as we know, they were not. There were balancing sects; and we see in the denunciations, both of the Baptist and of Jesus, how the Pharisees were regarded by those who were reared in, or inclined towards, the principles of a different sect.—The Pharisaic body including men of education only, it is natural that some of its doctrines should be of foreign derivation. They were the

“bibliolators” of the Jews, sacrificing the spirit and meaning to the letter of their sacred records ; and building up on every phrase of this letter a structure of arbitrary meanings which made the record “of none effect.” Some of their material for commentary was derived from the Egyptians, and some from the Greeks (who derived their opinions from Egypt) and some from the East. Their Pythagorean doctrines about death and the soul were, as we have before said in connexion with Pythagoras himself, coincident with those of the Egyptians. They believed in the abode of the dead in Hades ; in the immediate and eternal damnation of the souls of the desperately wicked ; and in the transmigration of all other souls. They believed in a partial Necessity ; enough to authorise their doctrine of a Providence ; but so partial as to permit them to punish heretical opinion severely, while they visited moral crime but lightly. Such is the account given by Josephus the Pharisee. They believed in the existence of angels, good and bad ; and agreed with the Egyptians in the assertion that the chief of the good angels,—the first of the sons of the Supreme, was uncreated, and capable of manifestation on earth, for beneficent objects. This was evidently the Osiris of the Egyptians, the Logos of the Platonists, and the Second Person of the Trinity set forth by the Platonising Christians in a later age. They believed in bad angels as well as good, and perpetuated that doctrine of a Power of Evil which in their time had been imported from other faiths, in direct opposition to the purer doctrine taught by Isaiah, xlvi. 7. Their great remaining tenet was truly and exclusively Jewish ; that Jehovah was so bound to His people as that he *could*

not condemn nor forsake them, but was obliged to grant them a Messiah, and eternal prosperity.—As for their practical life, they were likened, as Josephus tells us, to the Stoicks: and they professed extreme and exalted virtue: but, by means of their oral law, there was always an escape for those who desired one; and the result seems to have been that while the most ostentatious and conspicuous of the Pharisees were disagreeable and dangerous from their sanctimoniousness and legal morality, the majority of them were much like other people,—good or bad more in proportion to their natural constitution and position than through the abstract doctrines they held. That they held such doctrines is, however, a matter of the highest interest to us. That there were humble and teachable Pharisees is as certain as that there are proud and selfish Christians. Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, and other men who could stoop to learn, were Pharisees.—Dr. Kitto, after speaking of their temper and conduct, observes * “Of their *doctrines*, as far as they went, and as far as they are noticed, Christ and his apostles appear to have thought more favourably—or, at least, they are much preferred to the opposite doctrine of the Sadducees.”

* In opposition to the Pharisees,—the Traditionists,—arose the sect of the Anti-traditionists, the Sadducees, whose doctrines are soon told, as their profession consisted chiefly of negations. They denied the existence of any spiritual beings but Jehovah himself, and therefore the future existence of man. It is noticeable that in this, and in its necessary consequence, their inexorable punishment of moral offences, they were primitive

* Palestine, p. 719.

Hebrews,—close followers of Moses. And they strictly adhered to the recorded Law, rejecting traditions altogether. They held the doctrine of Free-will to its utmost extent, which indeed was necessary under their practice of inexorable retribution. The date of the rise of this sect is not more clearly known than that of the Pharisees: but it is evident that the doctrines of the Sadducees had a large intermixture from the Greek: and they were held by the literary and travelled men of the Hebrew aristocracy: by those who were most likely to be conversant with Greek writings, and with such strangers from that country as occasionally visited Jerusalem. It was they who carried some Greek elements into the deliberations of the Sanhedrim, where they were the most powerful party in the time of Christ, and into the administration of the priestly office; for Caiaphas and Ananias, high priests, were Sadducees. Though they were more primitive Mosaists than the Pharisees, they were not more acceptable to Jesus. Their aristocratic tendencies, their scepticism and pride of intellect, and their corrupting doctrine of Free-will were all diametrically opposed to the views and aspirations of one who came to offer his Glad Tidings to the poor,—to give rest to the souls of the weary and heavy laden,—and to teach that not a sparrow falls to the ground without the ordination of God;—of one, in short, whose sympathies were with the remaining sect, —the Essenes.

It is impossible to enter philosophically in any degree into the mind of Christ without considering how large an element of his thought was the life and doctrine of the Essenes. When we read of them in Josephus and

Philo, we see reflected back as in a mirror the life of the gospel, or, at least, the idea of that life which was held by the early Christians. The Sermon on the Mount might be taken as one long blessing on the Essenes,—the non-resistants, the abjurers of property, the humble, the mortified, the industrious, the charitable! The leading object,—the central purpose—of the Essenes was that of fulfilling the Moral Ideal of the Law. While the Pharisees were allegorising, and heaping Traditions upon the original structure of the Mosaic system, and the Sadducees were rigidly preserving and adhering to the simplicity of that structure, the Essenes gave their whole mind to the ascertainment and realisation of its moral import. There is no doubt that they added much to the meaning of Moses, and saw many moral principles and practices in his system which he never put there: and it is clear that their additions were derived from Egypt and Greece. There was a close affinity between them and the Pythagoreans who resorted to Egypt in great numbers when their schools in Europe were broken up. The Essene communities in Egypt and Palestine, between which a brotherly intercourse was always going on, were mainly Pythagorean in their discipline, and in their mysteries; and so remarkably Christian in their moral doctrine and practices, that it was long supposed that Philo, giving an account of the Egyptian Essenes, was a Christian giving an account of a Christian community. There is no question, however, of their prosperous existence for some centuries before the birth of Christ. Their societies undoubtedly formed the model of the first Christian communities, and of subsequent monastic

associations. They held their goods in common, forbidding a man to have two cloaks or two staves, and not allowing him to be in want of one. They were in the strictest sense Necessarians, going far beyond the Pharisees in this particular, and not being exceeded by the Mohammedans themselves. They believed that the hairs of men's heads were all numbered, and that every movement of their thoughts was determined by an immutable providence. They held that men are truly and practically brethren, under the Paternity of God: a most memorable advance upon the morality of the then existing world. They refused to call any man Master upon earth, denouncing slavery, and discountenancing every kind of servitude. They ordered obedience to the civil power, but no participation in it. All political action was discountenanced; and absolute non-resistance, giving the cheek to the smiter rather than raising the hand, was inculcated. With this went unlimited forgiveness of injuries. They might have had for their motto that glorious text of the Kurán, "To endure and to pardon is the wisdom of life." They taught that the best temper for man consisted in three affections: Love of God; love of the Truth, and love of Man: and that the best employments of man corresponded to these: viz., contemplation and healing the bodies and souls of men. Hence the name of Therapeutaæ which they bore in Egypt. They called themselves, and were called by others, Physicians of bodies and souls. While abstaining from marriage themselves, as a matter of expediency, they opened their arms to children, out of love to them for their purity, as well as compassion for their helplessness. They might have

ininscribed over their doors the words “Suffer the little children to come unto us, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of heaven:” and the children did go to them, and were taken in and cherished, as were the hungry and the naked, and the sick and miserable. They reprobated oaths, and practised the utmost plainness of speech, thinking that all exaggerations of their Yea and Nay came of evil.—Another primary point with them was strictness of truth:—their Yea was yea, and their Nay nay.*

In estimating the religious elements of Jewish life before the time of Christ, it is impossible not to be struck with the coincidences between the life and doctrine of the Essenes and the life and doctrine of Jesus: and further, when we read his rebukes of the other two sects, and obscrve that he nowhere denounces any practice of the Essenes, while incessantly preaching their views of truth, and inculcating their morality, it is clear that they enjoyed his favour. In the opinion of learned men† there is much evidence to show that the Baptist was an Essene of the anchorite order, being “in the deserts till the time of his showing unto Israel.”‡ There were two orders in the body of the Essenes; the contemplative and the practical. The contemplative were the Jewish anchorites in Egypt, who retired to caves and fastnesses while Cambyses ravaged the Valley of the Nile; and who afterwards were the model of the Christian hermits who were sprinkled among the desert rocks of Egypt. Of this order it is that John was supposed to be, with

* Philo, *De Vitâ Contemplativâ*. Josephus, *Antiq.* Book XVIII. ch. 2.

† See Taylor in Calmet “Dictionary to the Bible.” ‡ Luke I. 80.

his desert dress and food.—The other order lived, as has been said, in community, employed in works of charity as well as in contemplation. The Essenes of Palestine are declared by Josephus to have been of this second order; and their chief establishment was on the western shore of the Dead Sea:—that is, in the neighbourhood of the Baptist's home,—“in the hill country of Judea.”—Jesus was for some time a disciple of John, with evidently no thought, at that period, of a higher destiny for himself. From this, from the celibacy of both, (otherwise a fault and reproach among the Jews,) from the omission of all rebuke of this sect alone, and from his incessant promulgation of the Essene doctrine and morality, it appears that those scholars are probably right who believe that Jesus received, like thousands of the Jewish youth of his day, his training from the Essenes. The number of the professed Essenes at that time was four thousand in Palestine; and these were the teachers of a multitude of the next generation. In Egypt, the sect was much larger.

There is no need to point out the faults and dangers of the Essene institutions. They were the same as are found in all forms of monastic life, and all schemes of mystical religion. While admiring the singular beauty (so endeared to us by our Christian associations,) of their principles of worship, affection and action, we see in their celibacy and other asceticism, and their uniform rule of life for all comers, the same liabilities and errors as belong to monastic life everywhere, under all systems of faith. In the somewhat ascetic, and entirely non-resistant character which the Glad Tidings of Jesus derived from this element of

their origin, we certainly see the prophecy of the rise of Mohammedanism in the world, and its temporary spread to a wider extent than its parent Christianity : but we are at the same time struck with the glorious liberality of those Glad Tidings, and their exemption from all the errors and extravagances which were incorporated with the Essene scheme and its workings.

During the infancy and growth of all these sects, political events succeeded one another, of such a kind, and in such an order, as to bring a great accession of ideas to the Jewish mind, and cause a wide association with the minds of other countries.

Alexander the Great came, after his destruction of Tyre, (B.C. 332), to chastise Jerusalem, because the High Priest had pleaded his oath of allegiance to Darius. He was met on the heights of Sapha, within view of Jerusalem, by the High Priest and a long train of attendant priests, and citizens in white garments, who came forth to set before the conqueror the claims and the threats of Jehovah : and then, as the history tells,* he did what he afterwards did when a similar train met him from Memphis :—he went out to meet the High Priest Jaddua, and adored the Name inscribed on his mitre, declaring to his Greek attendants that what he worshipped was not the minister of Jehovah, but the great God whom he represented. And here, as afterwards in honour of Amun, he sacrificed in honour of the Supreme God, and secured to the people the enjoyment of their own laws and their accustomed privileges. Parmenio was by his side ; and many Greek philosophers and learned men in his train,

* Josephus, Antiq. XI., 8, 4, 5.

who freely associated with the higher classes of the Jews.—And then ensued that period of Egyptian protection,—sixty years of repose while the Jews paid tribute to the Ptolemies, and had unrestricted intercourse with the Egyptian priesthood, and liberty to dwell, and build, and worship, at Alexandria and Heliopolis,—which had great effect in enlarging the minds of the Jewish sects, and abolishing their nationality of thought and feeling. At this time, the prevalence of Greek proper names in Jewish families shows how intimate was the intercourse of those two nations. As Dr. Kitto observes,* “there is ample evidence that the more opulent classes cultivated the language, and imbibed some of the manners of the Greeks. It is also apparent that some acquaintance with the Greek philosophers was obtained, and made wild work in Jewish minds.”—And afterwards came the dread power of Rome, to lay waste Jerusalem by its agents, the generals of Antiochus, when, on a certain memorable Sabbath, the streets of Jerusalem flowed with blood, and the most awful of all events happened,—the suspension of the daily sacrifice. It was in the month of June (B.C. 167) that this took place, and that Jerusalem was completely deserted, the surviving inhabitants taking refuge among the nearest of the gentiles. The temple was then dedicated, at the command of Antiochus, to Jupiter Olympius; an altar to the heathen god was set up upon that hitherto sacred to Jehovah, and the people were instructed in the Greek religion by teachers sent among them for the purpose.†—Then arose the Asmonean family, to restore the national

* Kitto's Palestine, p. 674.

† Ibid. pp. 685, 686.

worship, and reconstitute the Jewish people. They might overthrow the heathen altars, and declare again the name of Jehovah ; but they could not drive out the Greek elements which had found their way into the Jewish mind, or depress the sect of the Sadducees which rose into a flourishing condition by means of them. The army of Judas Maccabæus came to Mount Zion, and cast ashes on their heads when they saw how the temple of Jehovah lay open to the winds, and how its “courts were grown over with shrubs, as in the forest, or on the mountain.” They might and did repair the temple ; but they could not undo that desecration of the national mind which had taken place from the intrusion of the heathen.

Then ensued the enmity between the Pharisees and the Asmonean princes, which, as either cause or consequence of the interference of that sect in public affairs,* could not but have a great influence on religious opinion in Palestine. The Asmonean house went over to the Sadducees ; and a bitter war of opinion ensued, fatal to unity of faith throughout the nation.—The next time we look towards the temple, we find Pompey in it,—intruding with his officers actually into the Holy of Holies. He captured it b.c. 63, on the very day kept sacred as a mourning fast by the Jews, as the anniversary of the conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. This was the date of the establishment of the Roman power in Palestine. The walls of the city were demolished, and the Jews became tributary to Rome.

It is observable that Egyptian worship was at this

* Kitto's Palestine, p. 705.

time and afterwards so eagerly followed in Italy, "that Augustus made a law that no Egyptian ceremonies should enter the city, or even the suburbs of Rome." * And again, it is remarkable that the Egyptian and Jewish faiths were classed together by the authorities at Rome. Tacitus tells us that "the Roman Senate made a new law (A.D. 19) against the Egyptian and Jewish superstitions, and banished to Sardinia four thousand men who were found guilty of being Jews." †

Nothing is more striking to the students of these critical times of the world's history than the evidence of the wide intercourse of minds which existed in ages when we are apt to suppose that, for want of the art of printing, nations were shut up within themselves, and remained as exclusive in their characteristics of mind as of race. We should remember that war acted upon them almost as powerfully as commerce does upon us, and quite differently from the warfare of modern times. It not only opened countries to each other, but brought the respective citizens face to face. A colonial or other connexion usually grew up out of war; and the wisest men of either country travelled in the territory of the other; and there was frequently an exchange of citizens. The countries of the old world had commerce too. It did not occasion the extensive intercourse of modern times, nor intermingle different people to such a degree as war: but it wrought in its own way. We must also consider that if the ancients had not our extensive circulation of books, they had, on that account, far more earnestness in their inquiry after new ideas, and their reception of them. When sages

* Sharpe's History of Egypt, p. 356.

+ Ibid. p. 363.

and priests met face to face, from distant countries, they impressed one another far more deeply than we are often impressed by books ; and their pursuit of philosophy was much more serious than ours. It appears that the Jews had their full share of the advantages of foreign intercourses ; and that they were so far from being the homogeneous and separate people that they are ordinarily supposed to be, that abundant foreign elements entered into their constitution, both of mind and race, from the time of their entrance upon the Promised Land to that of their final dispersion.

It cannot be overlooked, in this review, how large was the Egyptian element, in comparison with every other. On every side, except the east, it was continually, however silently, flowing in. The Hebrew mind was fed by the Egyptian incessantly, throughout its whole existence. Besides what the Jews obtained from Moses, and by all their direct fraternisation with the Egyptians, at intervals, for many ages, the Egyptian mind communicated with theirs through the Greeks, the Syrians, and the Romans : so that to understand their faith, their ordinances, their philosophy, their sects, their monachism, their history and their literature, it is necessary to go back to Egypt for the key. To a certain extent, the case is the same with some other nations,—with the Greeks and the Etruscans especially : but the strongest affinity we know of among ancient peoples was that between the Egyptians and the Hebrews; and it is highly necessary not to lose sight of this kindred relation in exploring the mind of the Jewish people at any assigned period.

Herod began rebuilding the temple b.c. 17 ; and it was fit for the resumption of the service in b.c. 7. It was this new structure that Jesus and his disciples were contemplating when they spoke of its having been "forty and six years in building."—Here it was that he found the Pharisees haughtily insisting on the minutiae of their ritual, and elaborating their Pythagorean doctrines of the soul and its prospects. Here it was that he found the Scribes expounding the Law to those who could never hope to understand its intricacies without help. Here it was that he found the Sadducees contending for the simplicity of the primitive Law, and for that Majesty of Jehovah which forbade his interference with the affairs of men. Here it was that he saw carried to the altar, the sacrifices sent by Essenes who would not personally mingle in the pomps and vanities of a ritual worship. Here it was that he found, brought in by the four winds, and intermingling like the fumes of the incense and the smoke of the sacrifice, all that the minds of distant nations had to offer before the sanctuary of the true God ; the wisdom of the Egyptians, the science of the Assyrians, the philosophy of the Greeks, and the now strict monotheism of the Hebrews. Here it was that he, by his god-like nature, gathered into himself and assimilated all that was true, deep, noble, and endearing in this world-wide range of thought, and gave it forth again, in such a music of Glad Tidings, ringing clear under that temple roof, as that every heart felt,—“never man spake like this man !”

CHAPTER III.

JERUSALEM.—THE ENGLISH MISSION.—MOSQUE OF OMAR.—JEWS' PLACE OF WAILING.—VALLEY OF JEHOSHAPHAT.—GREEK FIRE.—DAVID'S TOMB AND CÆNACULUM.—ARMENIAN CONVENT.—LEPERS.—CAVE OF JEREMIAH.—ENVIRONS.

WE considered ourselves most fortunate in our lodgment at Jerusalem ;—I mean in the position of our rooms at Salvador's hotel. The house would not contain the whole of our party, and three went to lodgings. But we ladies had light airy rooms opening upon the highest platform of the hotel :—this platform being the roof of a lower set of chambers. I was never tired of gazing abroad from the parapet of our little terrace, from which I could command a large extent of the flat roofs of the city, and of its picturesque walls. The narrow, winding street far below, which we overlooked almost from end to end, was the Via Dolorosa ; and it was spanned midway by the Ecce Homo arch. This Mournful Way, where I rarely saw any one walking, attracted the eye all the more from its being almost the only street we had a glimpse of ; the streets of Eastern cities being so narrow as not to be visible from a height. Some few were traceable by a comparison of the lines of house tops, and the guidance of the minarets which

sprang from among the roofs, tall and light as the poplar from the long grass of the meadow: but the only street which we could look down into was the Via Dolorosa. Beyond the city, and directly opposite, rose the long slope of Olivet. It was now the time of full moon; and evening after evening, I leaned on that parapet, watching for the coming up of the large yellow moon behind the ridge of the Mount of Olives. By day the slopes of the Mount were green with the springing wheat, and dappled with the shade of the Olive clumps. By night, those clumps and lines of trees were dark amidst the lights and shadows cast by the moon; and they guided the eye, in the absence of daylight, to the most interesting points,—the descent to the brook Kedron, the road to Bethany, and the place whence Jesus is said to have looked over upon the noble city when he pronounced its doom.

It is still a noble city. The Jebusites certainly chose for their fort one of the finest sites in the world: and when David took it from them, he might well glory in his beautiful Zion. From this day forward how dead seemed to me all my former impressions of Jerusalem! —not of its sacredness, but of its beauty and nobleness. I can scarcely remember the time when I did not know familiarly all its hills, and its gates, and its temple courts, so as to read the New Testament as with a plan in my head. But I never had the slightest conception of that beauty which now at once enabled me to enter into the exultation of David, and the mourning of Nehemiah, and the generous concern of Titus, and the pride of the Saracen, and the enthusiasm of the Crusader. The mournful love of the Holy City grew from

day to day, as I became familiar with its precincts ; but no single view so took me by surprise as that which we obtained in the course of our walk this first day.

There is a strange charm in the mere streets, from the picturesque character of the walls and archways. The old walls of yellow stone are so beautifully tufted with weeds, that one longs to paint every angle and projection, with its mellow colouring, and dangling and trailing garlands. And the shadowy archways, where the vaulted roofs intersect each other, till they are lost in the dazzle of the sunshine beyond, are like a noble dream. The pavement is the worst I ever walked on ; —worse than Cologne ; worse than my native city of Norwich : but, being a native of Norwich, and having been familiar with its pavement for thirty years, I was not so distressed as my companions, who could hardly make their way in Jerusalem over the large, slippery stones, slanting all manner of ways.

We found the bazaars much crowded, this first day, and abounding in fruits and vegetables. It was Holy Week, which accounted for the throng, and for the display of oranges, lemons, figs, nuts and almonds, pumpkins and cucumbers. The lightness of the complexions, and the mild beauty of the faces were very striking, after so many weeks among the Arabs in the Desert.

We were now on our way to the English church, from which we obtained the fine view I have alluded to. The walls of this new church were up, and the pillars rising ; and a spiral staircase at one corner was so finished as that we could mount. Some of our party exclaimed at the smallness of this pretty new church : but I much doubt whether there will ever be Jewish

converts enough to fill it. I should have supposed that any consideration at home of the genius of the Jewish religion, and much more on the spot, would have shown the unsoundness of the scheme. Those who are intimate with the minds of educated and conscientious Jews are aware that such cannot be converted to Christianity: that the very foundation of their faith cannot support that superstructure: that there can be, to them, no reason why they should change, and every conceivable reason why they should not. *They* well know that it is only the ill-grounded Jew who can be converted; the weak, the ignorant, or the needy and immoral. After all these years, the converts are very few; they are not all Jews; and there is a difficulty about the maintenance of even those few. There was talk, when we were at Jerusalem, of endeavouring to set up a House of Industry, because the converts of course become outcasts from their own people. Those who withdraw these converts from their old connexions, habits, principles and intercourses, are indeed under an obligation to supply them with new: but it is to be hoped that they consider well what they are doing, and how tremendous a responsibility they are taking on themselves, as regards the *morale*, as well as the fortunes of their converts. It is no light matter to subvert a man's habits of mind and life, to isolate him in the midst of his own city and race, and render him wholly dependent on his religious teachers. It should be well considered whether the loss of the faith of his fathers, and the radical shaking of his own; the exclusion from family, society, and employment; the loss of tranquillity, and the great moral dangers of such an uprooting as

none but a Jew can ever experience, are really compensated for by anything that the Mission at Jerusalem has hitherto found itself able to impart. It scarcely needs to be pointed out, in regard to this proposed House of Industry, that when once the Mission becomes an alms-house affair, before the eyes of the city,—a city full of Mohammedans and Jews who already regard the Protestant Christians with utter contempt,—there is an end to all hope of converting any but the alms-house order of people;—the needy and lazy. The hospital of the Mission is an interesting establishment, and, to all appearance, well managed. If the Mission is to be a charitable institution, well and good, (supposing it to be proved, as a charity, worth its cost:) only let it be called so: that a vast expense may perhaps be saved, which is sorely craved by our heathens at home, who are unquestionably in a far worse state of spiritual destitution than the Jews in Palestine. While we have millions of savages in our own island,—heathens without heathen gods—I cannot see why we should spend on a handful of strangers who have already a noble faith of their own, the resources which would support Home Missions to a much greater extent. Time will show: but my own persuasion is that the Jerusalem Mission cannot, from errors inherent in its very conception, long endure.—On the Good Friday when we were there, five Jews,—three men and two women—were baptised: and one of the ladies of the Mission told me that the number of converts was sixty in the thirteen years since the first effort was made. We were attended by their first convert, Abdallah, as a guide. He was not a Jew, but

a Druse. He was an obliging, genial fellow, who told us that he very much wished to be mentioned in a book, if I should write one. He pressed for a commendatory certificate from me and others of our party. I did not know enough of him to grant his request, and was advised against it by those who had reason to know him. We were none of us, however, disposed to bear hard on the rapacity of any poor fellow who, cast out from his old faith and connexions, was deprived of his means of bread.

The congregation in the little church used by the Mission till their own is completed, was very small, even on Good Friday. Deducting the Mission families and our own large company, there were few left over.—We went to church that day with feelings of no ordinary interest. A Christian service at Jerusalem on Good Friday! It was an occasion which might rouse the most indifferent. So I should have thought: but never was I present at a service so utterly dead. This was not a matter of opinion: the deadness was a plain matter of fact. I am aware that it must be so with Missions in foreign lands, under the discouragements of the position, and in the absence of the intellectual stir and spiritual sympathy which naturally and continually occur at home: but yet I did wonder whether the converts could find in a service like this as much spiritual interest and benefit as their brethren without experience every sabbath in the time-hallowed services of the synagogue. Of the qualifications of the Bishop in every way, and the sincerity of his clergy, I never heard or conceived a doubt. The impediments to adequate success are in the very nature of the enterprise,

and the position of the parties, and are, as I think will be proved, insuperable by them.

Our first view over the whole city was from the top of the Mission Church. The extent and handsome appearance of Jerusalem surprised us. The population is said not to exceed fifteen thousand : but the city covers a great extent of ground, from the courts which are enclosed by eastern houses, and the large unoccupied spaces which lie within the walls. The massive stone walls and substantial character of the buildings remove every appearance of sordidness, when the place is seen from a height : and the clearness of the atmosphere, and the hue of the building-material give a clean and cheerful air to the whole which accords little with the traveller's preconception of the fallen state of Jerusalem. The environs look fertile and flourishing, except where the Moab mountains rise lofty and bare, but adorned with the heavenly hues belonging to the glorious climate. The minarets glittered against the clear sky ; and the arches, marble platform, and splendid variegated buildings of the Mosque of Omar, crowning the heights of Moriah, were very beautiful.—We were glad to hear from the Consul's lady that the climate is found very healthy, there being always a fresh breeze, in the hottest summer weather.

On Good Friday, we took a very interesting walk. In the course of it, we saw the interior of a Jewish house, where the gentlemen went on business.—The handsome lady of the house invited me to the raised part of the apartment, while the gentlemen sat below, awaiting the host, who was so picturesque a

figure, with his two caps,—one on the top of the other,—his marked Jewish features, and graceful attitudes, his spectacles and vast beard, that I longed to carry away a sketch of him. The women of the household had very fair complexions and blue eyes. As for the apartment, the floor was ricketty ; and so were the two bedsteads. The table-cloth, strewed with the crumbs of the late meal, was absolutely filthy : while there was a great quantity of plate, massive and old-fashioned, on a sideboard ; the cushions of the deewán were of rich brocade ; and some prints of eminent living Jews hung round the walls. The dress of the Jewish women is deforming to the figure, but very becoming to the head. The turbans of the men, chiefly blue or white, are substantial and lofty, like the priests' helmets which we see in old pictures. It was always a treat to walk through the Jew quarter, and especially on the Sabbath, when numbers were abroad in their best costume, sitting at their doors, or passing to or from the synagogue through the quiet streets. They are a very handsome race, with eyes which seem to distinguish them from the rest of mankind,—large, soft, and of the deepest expression.

We went forth to-day by the Via Dolorosa, which was so quiet that the horse's feet of a passing rider sounded as they might in the Sîk at Petra. We turned into an arcade to the right, in order to get as near as infidels may to the Mosque of Omar. No Jew or Christian can pass the threshold of the outermost courts without certain and immediate death by stoning or beating. It requires some little resolution, for those who dislike being hated, to approach this threshold, so

abominable are the insults offered to strangers. A boy began immediately to spit at us. We presently obtained a better view of this usurping temple from the city wall which we climbed for the purpose.—From hence, the inclosure was spread out beneath us, as in a map, and we could perceive the proportion it bore to the rest of the city, and observe how much lower Mount Moriah was than Zion. The Mosque was very beautiful, with its vast dome, and its walls of variegated marbles, and its noble marble platform, with its flights of steps and light arcades ; and the green lawn which sloped away all round, and the cypress trees, under which a row of worshippers were at their prayers. It was the Mohammedan sabbath ; and troops of children were at play on the grass ; and parties of women in white,—Mohammedan nuns,—were sitting near them ; and the whole scene was proud and joyous. But, with all this before my eyes, my mind was with the past. It seemed as if the past were more truly before me than what I saw. Here was the ground chosen by David, and levelled by Solomon to receive the Temple of Jehovah. Here it was that the great king lavished his wealth ; and hither came the Sun-worshippers from the East to lay hands on the treasure, and level the walls, and carry the people away captive.—Here was it restored under Ezra, and fortified round when the people worked at the walls with arms in their girdles and by their sides : and here, when all had been again laid waste, did Herod raise the structure which was so glorious that the Jews were as proud as the Mohammedans now before my eyes, and mocked at the saying that it should ever be overthrown. I seemed to see it

now as it was then, with its glittering roof, whose plates of gold were too dazzling to look upon in the morning sun; and its golden vine, covering the front of the Holy place; and its colonnades which separated the temple itself from its outer courts. I looked for the place where the Sheep-gate was, and the Water-gate, through which the priest went down to the spring of Siloam, and declared, as he returned with the golden ewer, that thus they drew water from the wells of salvation. I looked for the court beyond which the money-changers should not have been permitted to intrude; and the Court of the Gentiles, and the Court of the Women; and where the Treasury-chest stood, so placed on the right of the entrance that when the worshipper threw in his gift, the left hand would not know what the right hand did. I saw where the Scribes must have sat to teach, and where Christ so taught in their jealous presence as to make converts of those who were sent to apprehend him. I saw where the altar stood, whence the smoke went up from the morning and evening sacrifice: and the Holy Place, with the ark in the midst; and the long purple curtain,—the veil destined to be rent,—which separated it from the Holy of Holies, where no one entered but the High Priest alone. These places had been familiar to my mind's eye from my youth up: and now I looked at the ground they had occupied, amidst scenery but little changed, with an emotion which none but those who have made the Bible the study of the best years of their life could conceive of. But this was not all. Here it was that Titus saw, from his camp over to our right, the flames shooting up to destroy the building which

he had resolved to save. Here it was consumed: and here the plough was brought to destroy the very foundations, so that one stone should not be left upon another. Here it was that "Moriah became a ploughed field," and the wild grapes grew where the golden vine had hung its clusters.—It was long after this before any Jew could see his Zion and Moriah even as we saw them now. All were banished; and when they returned and hung about the land, hoping to find some way in, so that they might die within sight of their holy hills, they were incessantly driven back. In the age of Constantine, however, they were allowed to approach so as to see the city from the surrounding heights;—a mournful liberty, like that of permitting an exile to look at his native shores from the sea, but never to land. At length, the Jews were allowed to purchase of the Roman soldiers leave to enter Jerusalem once a-year; and, of all days, on the anniversary of the fall of the city before Titus;—and merely to do—what we presently saw their descendants doing.

I have said how proud and prosperous looked the Mosque of Omar, with its marble buildings, its green lawns, the merry children, and gay inmates making holiday; all these ready and eager to stone to death on the instant any Jew or Christian who should dare to bring his homage to the sacred spot. This is what we saw within the walls.—We next went round the outside, till we came, by a narrow crooked passage, to a desolate spot, occupied by desolate people. Under a high, massive, very ancient wall was a dusty narrow inclosed space, where we saw the most mournful groups I ever encountered. This high ancient wall, where

weeds are springing from the crevices of the stones, is believed to be a part, and the only part remaining, of Solomon's temple wall : and here the Jews come every Friday, to their Place of Wailing, as it is called, to mourn over the fall of their Beautiful House, and pray for its restoration. What a contrast did these humbled people present to the proud Mohammedans within ! The women were sitting in the dust,—some wailing aloud, some repeating prayers with moving lips, and others reading them from books on their knees. A few children were at play on the ground, and some aged men sat silent, their heads drooped on their breasts. Several younger men were leaning against the wall, pressing their foreheads against the stones, and resting their books on their clasped hands in the crevices. With some, this wailing is no form : for I saw tears on their cheeks. I longed to know if any had hope in their hearts that they, or their children within a few generations, should pass that wall, and become the echoes of that ancient cry “Lift up your heads, O ye gates, that the King of Glory may come in !” If they have any such hope, it may give some sweetness to this rite of humiliation. We had no such hope for them ; and it was with unspeakable sadness that I, for one, turned away from the thought of the pride and tyranny within that inclosure, and the desolation without, carrying with me a deep-felt lesson on the strength of human faith, and the weakness of the tie of human brotherhood.

Whether the strength be equal under all faiths or not, it appears that the weakness is. See here what is done in the name of religion ! This Jerusalem is the

most sacred place in the world, except Mekkeh, to the Mohammedan: and to the Christian and the Jew, it is the most sacred place in the world. What are they doing in this sanctuary of their common Father, as they all declare it to be? Here are the Mohammedans eager to kill any Jew or Christian who may enter the Mosque of Omar. There are the Greek and Latin Christians hating each other, and ready to kill any Jew or Mohammedan who may enter the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. And here are the Jews, pleading against their enemies, in the vengeful language of their ancient prophets. On them, we are not disposed to bear hardly; and we do not wonder if, in the imagination of the pride which is glorying in its usurpation behind that wall, and when the breeze brings the light laughter of the children who are sporting within, the mourners cry from their Place of Wailing, "Happy shall he be who rewardeth thee as thou hast served us! Happy shall he be who taketh thy little ones, and dasheth them against the stones!" But still, looking upon Religion as she now appears in this, her throne and sanctuary, we find but a hideous idol which has usurped the oracles, instructing men to be proud before God, and to hate one another.

We were shown, near this spot, the remains of the bridge which once joined the two hills, Zion and Moriah. The piers of a bridge are distinct enough. The heaps of rubbish and ruined wall here made this place as desolate as any thing we saw in Egypt.

One object with us to-day was to sit down, and read as much of the gospel history as relates to the temple and its vicinity, within view of the places themselves:

but Abdallah would not permit us to do so. He had prepared his list of what we were to see, and took the management of us completely. He led us to the Golden Gate : a portal of the Mosque of Omar, well walled up, and constantly guarded ; the Mohammedans having a tradition that if ever they are driven out from possession, it will be by the Jews or Christians entering at this gate.—The temple wall can hardly have been entirely levelled at this part,—any more than at the Jews' Place of Wailing; for the very large stones,—blocks of twenty-four feet long,—built into the wall near the base, are, by universal agreement, ancient ; though all the upper part of the wall is manifestly modern. At this place I found a difficulty which occurred to me whenever I passed under this eastern wall, or through the valley of Jehoshaphat, above which we now stood.—At the bottom of this valley runs the brook Kedron,—or rather, its channel ; for I believe water is never seen in it. The valley is about half a mile long, from the village of Siloam to the Garden of Gethsemane. Its rocky sides are full of tombs ; and here it is that the Jews expect the Last Judgment to take place, founding their belief on the text (Joel III. 12). “Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat : for there will I sit, to judge all the heathen round about.” The Mohammedans of Jerusalem have picked up something of this from the Jews ; for they show a stone in this, their temple wall, where their Prophet is to sit on the last day, while Christ executes judgment in the valley below. Now, in the time of Herod's temple, there was a sheer descent, from the top of the temple buildings to the brook, of 480 ft. What the

depth of the valley is now, I can nowhere learn ;* but certainly it is nothing like this. And there is such a projection under the wall as to form a terrace and long slope, where the Mohammedans have made a cemetery. Much of this projection may consist of rubbish from the overthrown city ; as is the case with the soil on Mount Zion : but it is difficult to see how this side of the valley should ever have been so precipitous as the old accounts make it. At first, I thought that the temple wall might have stood further out than the present wall : but there are the ancient hewn stones to contradict that supposition. The temple buildings on the eastern side being on the wall would give a considerable additional height : and their position, crowning the steep side of the valley, must have been as fine as can be conceived : but how the total height can ever have been 480 ft. it is not easy to see : nor how that side can ever have been wholly precipitous.

Abdallah showed us what is called, against all probability, the Pool of Bethesda. There are three arches at one end, which the stranger is told are the five porches. These arches are walled up : and they, and the whole circuit of walls, are tufted with weeds. All the pools in Palestine are beautiful : and this not less than others. It was measured by Maundrell, and is 120 paces long, forty broad, and not less than eight deep. There is never any water in it now : and there is every reason to suppose it a part of the fosse which once separated

* Dr. Robinson gives the depth of the precipice merely, below the S. E. corner of the wall, at 150 ft. I should have supposed it more : but there is a long slope from the top of the precipice to the base of the wall.—*Biblical Researches*, I., 343.

Mount Moriah from Bezetha. I could not but wish that this might have been Bethesda ; but it cannot be reasonably supposed so.

As we returned homewards, with our minds full of what we had seen, we encountered in the street two men fighting about a skin of water. Three others soon joined ; and a more desperate combat I never saw. They fought as they might for freedom or life ; and all about a skinful of water, which was spilt in the struggle. Here was the Arab “intensity,” shown in this childish way !

In the evening the rest of the party went to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, to see the washing of the Pilgrims’ feet. In Rome, I might have gone to such a spectacle : but here I could not. After having visited such scenes in the morning, and having now Olivet and the rising moon in view from our platform, I could not go to witness mummeries done in the name of Christianity, compared with which the lowest Fetishism on the banks of an African river would have been inoffensive.—Nor would I go the next day to see the miracle of the Greek fire in the same place.—This miracle has now dwindled down into a show so little marvellous that one wonders how long the faith in it will last. Formerly, as everyone knows, miraculous flames used to shoot out, red and green, from apertures on each side of, and behind the altar ; and the Pilgrims rushed to light their torches, throwing each other down, and trampling to death more or fewer who could not stand the rush. Moreover, there was a feud between the Greek and Latin Christians about which should remove the covering of the altar after the

ceremony; and lives were lost in this way. When Ibraheem Pasha ruled here, he endeavoured to keep order by going in himself, on one occasion, among the crowd; but he unfortunately fainted; and his soldiers brought him out with great violence. So many lives were lost on that occasion that a considerable modification of the proceedings ensued. The cloth is removed by the Mohammedan governor (a curious transaction of Christian worship!) and now the fire is diffused by torches being handed out of these apertures, and carried round for the Pilgrims to light theirs by,—the fire being still, for the present, called miraculous.

According to the account the gentlemen brought home, the crowd was very dense: the people were kept tolerably quiet by two rows of Turkish soldiers, till the fire appeared: but after the kindling of the pilgrims' torches, the hubbub was terrible to witness. The poor creatures were perfectly frantic, not only shouting and gesticulating, but leaping on one another's shoulders. One of my friends, who never uses strong language, told me "it was like a holiday in hell." Such is Christianity at Jerusalem!

We went that day to see David's tomb, or the place of it. A mosque is built over it,—outside the walls,—on Mount Zion. We were not worthy to see the tomb itself,—neither Jew nor Christian being permitted to approach it:—a most galling restriction to the resident Jews! But we saw a procession of Derweishes going to it. The Santons belonging to this mosque are very great men indeed, the most powerful in Jerusalem;—such great men that they do nothing whatever, and are fed by corn and other good things given them by the

people, on the compulsion of their holiness. Their horses, which awaited them near, were sleek, handsome creatures; and their masters looked much like other well-dressed Mohammedans. They walked in a kind of procession, with rude music, and entered the mosque.—We were told that there was one place in the same building which we might see:—the Cænaculum; the room where Jesus supped with his disciples. It is a very large upper room, dim and cheerless, with a niche at one end, where the Christians occasionally perform mass.—The place is supposed to be an ancient Christian church: but it cannot be what the legend declares it, as all the buildings on the heights of Zion were razed at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. We could not give any more belief to the House of Caiaphas which stands near,—a substantial, blank stone building.

The Armenian Convent, close at hand, has a most gorgeous chapel, but little that is interesting, and much that is painful to see. In Italy, I found the Christian mythology and superstitious observances very distressing to witness: but I could have had no idea how much more painful the spectacle is in Palestine. It is not merely that the simplicity of the actual teachings of Christ comes out most strikingly on the spot where he lived and taught; and that the singleness of his doctrine and the pure monotheism of his own ideas are evident as the daylight to those who have travelled with the Hebrews from Egypt hither, and read their history by local lights, but that in Egypt we had seen the origin of the mythology and superstitions which were engrafted upon Christianity at Alexandria, and in Greece and Rome, and which debase the religion

of Christ at this day. We had seen in Egypt, and in the Greek philosophy which was thence derived, ages before the time of Christ, those allegorical fables of Osiris and his nature and offices, of the descent of the Supreme on earth in a fleshly form, and the deifying or sanctification of intercessors which were unhappily, but very naturally, connected with the simple teachings of Christ by the Platonising converts of various countries, at an early period, and which to this day deform and vitiate the gospel in countries which yet keep clear of the open idolatries of the Greek and Latin churches. The vitiation of the teachings of Christ anywhere, and under the least offensive outward observance, is mournful enough: but here, while Christ, and nature, and history all bid us reverently preserve the purity and simplicity of his teachings, it is truly revolting to meet everywhere, in its extremest rankness, the superstition which the interfusion of the old Egyptian element has caused. Here we have, in these Christian churches, the wrathful "jealous God" of the old Hebrews, together with the propitiating Osiris, the malignant Typho, the Hades, the Purgatory, and the incarnations of the Egyptians and their disciple Pythagoras; the Logos of the Platonists, the incompatible resurrection and immortality of opposing schools, all mingled together, and profanely named after him who came to teach, not "cunningly devised fables," but that men should love their Father in heaven with all their hearts and minds, and their neighbour as themselves. The Egyptian theology and Greek philosophy were proper to their times, and venerable on that account, as the strongest light that men had reached: but, reproduced

with adulterations in Jerusalem, and used to take Christ's name in vain, they were as afflicting as the original records of the ideas in Egypt were interesting. The marks of the kissing of the tomb of St. James in this Armenian convent showed what the quality of the devotion here was.—The different churches in Jerusalem divide among them the objects which attract strangers. In this convent are shown the stone which closed the Holy Sepulchre; the "prison of Christ;" the spot where Peter denied his Lord, and the court where the cock crew: this being on the opposite side of the city from Fort Antonia and the residence of Pilate! The Armenian Patriarchs of Jerusalem are buried here: and near, are the cemeteries of all the Christian convents, where it is interesting to read the names of Englishmen who, without the wish entertained by pious Jews, have been destined to find their long rest here.

Near this place, just within the Zion Gate, are the huts of the Lepers. We passed them many times, and never without seeing the poor outcasts, sitting by the wayside to ask charity. All their lives long, they have no society beyond their own miserable company: and these intermarry, so that there are children born into their cursed life; born to give their parents something to hope for a few years, and then to show the disease, and die by inches under it.

Returning by the Jew Quarter, we looked into the synagogue,—I finding my way to the women's gallery, to the great surprise of some Jewesses who were gossiping on the ground, not far off. Only one woman was in the gallery; and nothing interesting was going forward.

When the gentlemen returned from church, the next day, (Sunday, April 4th,) we enjoyed a delightful ramble. We left the city by the Damascus gate, and came to one of those beautiful pools which I was always glad to fall in with. It is called the Sheep-pool ; and it lies dim under arches in the rock, whence hang long strings of weeds, ready to wave with the first breath of wind. An Arab was filling his waterskins there, his red tarboosh casting a light in among the shadowy waters and green ferns. I ran down to this pool, whenever we passed that way ; and I always found some such picture there.

Our present object was the Cave of Jeremiah, to which we approached over the open field. We were now on the ground of Titus's camp. Here lay "the abomination of desolation " at that terrible time. Here rang the armour and sounded the heavy tread of the cohorts ; and here the ground shook when the wooden towers of the Romans were pushed up against the walls, that Jew and Roman might fight face to face from the walls and from these towers. This was the only side on which the city could be attacked, the other three being surrounded by ravines. On this north side therefore the whole army was encamped, except one legion which occupied the lower slope of the Mount of Olives. I believe it is concluded that the northern wall corresponds to the outermost of the three walls on that side which inclosed the city in those days : and indeed there is but a narrow sinking of the ground, little more than a trench, between the wall and the high ground. On these slopes, and some way back into the country, lay the lines of Roman

tents, where now the whole ground was sheeted with young barley, and clumped and sprinkled over with olive trees. In a deep rural stillness, and passing among springing crops and fruitful orchards, we crossed this great military site, till we came to the silent rock-retreat which is named after Jeremiah.

The door was fast; and we knocked in vain. But on another occasion we obtained admission, and saw what we should have been sorry to have missed. This wonderful retreat is entered by a door cut in the south face of a rocky hill; which face seems to be artificially opened. The grotto itself appears to occupy the whole interior of the hill. A painter would find subjects for years within that door,—among the black, brown and grey rocks, the shadowy caverns, and brilliant projections, where light falls in all imaginable caprices. The whole would be too sombre,—almost as gloomy as the meditations of Jeremiah,—but for the weeds which here again cast in their vivid green to relieve the sense, and amuse the eye by the tossing of their tufts and ladders and garlands. This grotto is not a single cave, but a spacious set of caverns, separated by natural partitions, and rude pillars and intercolumnar screens. There is a whole nest of vaulted chapels or dwellings, crypts, and chambers, at hand,—accessible, I believe, only by the one portal in the hill side. The Latin monks occasionally perform mass in the cavern: and this was all we could learn about the place.

We were determined not to be disappointed of our reading to-day; and so we gave Abdallah to understand. He placed himself within hearing, and watched us with an appearance of strong curiosity.. From the

Cave, we had come round under the walls to the eastern side, where we found in the Turkish cemetery, some scanty shade, where we could sit, and look and listen. Here we read the whole of the gospel of Matthew which relates to scenes and events in Jerusalem or the neighbourhood. Behind us was the inclosure where the temple stood. At our feet, the ground sloped steeply down into the Valley of Jehoshaphat. In the depth of the valley was the channel of the brook Kedron, and on its opposite bank, far below to the left, was the Garden of Gethsemane, with its hoary olives. Before us uprose the long slope of Olivet, over which, to the right, slanted the road to Bethany. When, in my youth, I used to pore over the four gospels, trying to make a Harmony and a map on paper, and pictures in my mind, how little did I dream that I should sit and read the record here, under the temple wall, and find many things made so wonderfully clear! And O! how simple, how familiar, how *cheerful*, (yet all the more pathetic for that) are his teachings, when read in the presence of their illustrations, in comparison with the solemn delivery of them, cut up into verses, in our churches, and even our family circles at home! The biblical scholar may owe much to that device of Robert Stevens's,—much convenience for reference,—but, as for the rest of the world, it seems as if it would have been better for us that Robert Stevens should have slept all the way from Lyons to Paris, than that he should have spent his time in cutting up the Bible, in a vast hurry, into verses. Happily, there are paragraph bibles still to be had; though too few seem to prefer the use of them.

Nothing struck us more than the space and vastness everywhere about us. The commonest disappointment of all in seeing places which one has dreamed of all one's life, or remembered from childhood, is to find everything so small. My idea of Jerusalem was of a city nearly surrounded with dells, with a mere rising ground for the Mount of Olives. But as we sat among the tombs to-day, the wayfarers on the Bethany road, and the horsemen in the valley below, and the goat-herds on the slope of Olivet, were diminished to the size of people on the sea shore, seen from a lofty cliff. From a mere glance round, one would have said that we had the whole scene nearly to ourselves ; but, when we came to consider, there were many people within sight, and they appeared so few only on account of the scale of the surrounding objects. The village of Siloam was on the opposite hill, about half a mile away to the right ; and I watched the progress of two horsemen from before it to the point of road near us, ascending to the city. I was surprised to see how slow appeared their progress, and how small their size below ; and how long they were in winding up the hill on which we sat. The gaping tombs in the opposite rocks looked mere holes.—The winding away of the valley southwards was exceedingly beautiful, with its red rocks and dim olive groves, and sloping fields and craggy, terraced hills, till the distant heights overlapped, and screened from us the blue Moab mountains.

In returning, we skirted the city southwards, and entered by the Zion gate. The trees of the Armenian convent garden tempted us in : but we found nothing worth looking at, and brought away only a few roses

and poor geraniums. We had not yet set foot on the Mount of Olives, or crossed the Kedron. These and some other sacred places we were to explore a few days hence, on our return from an expedition to the Jordan and the Dead Sea.

CHAPTER IV.

BETHANY.—PLAIN OF JERICHO.—ELISHA'S SPRING.—
JERICHO.—THE JORDAN.—THE DEAD SEA.—CONVENT
OF SANTA SABA.

ON Monday, April 5th, we were on horseback early for our rendezvous in the valley of Jehoshaphat. The party were to meet at Job's Tomb ; and a large company we appeared when assembled. Our Desert comrades were all there ; and four strangers,—European gentlemen who had asked permission to ride with us, on account of the insecurity of the roads. Our servants, tents and kitchens were there, as we had to spend two nights away from Jerusalem ; and ten well-armed guards escorted us. The road from Jerusalem to Jericho is as dangerous from thieves as ever it was. There is not a worse road in Palestine : but our caravan was too large to be attacked by any band of robbers ; and we hardly saw a human figure, except at the wells, the whole way, after leaving Bethany.

It was about nine o'clock when we began to wind up the camel road to Bethany, which led us over the eastern ridge of Olivet. As soon as we had passed the ridge, Bethany came in view, lying on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, and, as everybody knows, "fifteen furlongs" distant from Jerusalem. It is now a village

inhabited by about twenty families ; a very poor place ; but looking less squalid than might be expected, from its houses being built, as everywhere in that country, of stone ;—square, substantial, and large dwellings, compared with village abodes elsewhere. Its position on the side of the hill is very fine, seen from below.—The moment of interest, however, is in crossing the ridge above, when one is about to lose sight of Jerusalem, towering on its Zion behind, and to drop down into the village, which lies so quietly among its olive groves and fields. This is the spot for remembering who it was that was so glad to come hither and rest : to place that ridge between himself and the doomed city, which was revelling in her Pharisaic pride, ready to stone him who was sent unto her ; to leave behind all that pride and peril, and come here to repose among friends, and open his human affections to Lazarus and his sisters.

We were desired to dismount, just above Bethany, to visit what the monks call the Tomb of Lazarus. Without supposing it to be that, we found it interesting, as a really ancient tomb. It was so small, that few of us went down ; but I wished to see the whole of it. A few steep and difficult steps brought me down into a small vaulted chamber ; and two or three more very deep and narrow steps led to the lower chamber where the body was laid. We questioned whether there was room for more than one body. In exploring tombs in this country, whether such as this, or the more picturesque and natural burial-places in the branching caverns of the limestone rocks, I often wished that the old painters had enjoyed our opportunities,—for the sake of art as

well as truth : and then we should have had representations of Lazarus coming forth from chambers in the rock, instead of rising from such a grave as we see dug in European churchyards. The limestone rocks, full of caverns, now used as dwellings for men and cattle, were of old those "chambers of the grave" which puzzled our childhood by that name : and it is a great privilege to have seen them, so as to understand how the dead were said to be calling to each other ; and how the stone was rolled away from the mouth of the sepulchres, and how Jesus could have cried with a loud voice for the dead to come forth. After having visited these places, how vivid is the picture of such scenes ! How the voice echoes through those dim "chambers of the tomb," and is answered by the dead man appearing in his cere-ments,—appearing from the end of the passage, or in the shadow of the recess !

The monks, when taken as guides, show in the village the house of Martha and Mary, as they pretend, and that of Simon the Leper : but we did not inquire for these, having no wish to mix up anything fabulous with our observations of a place so interesting as Bethany.

Our road led us to the bottom of the valley, where there were patches of cultivation on the stony soil. We rode for three or four miles, sometimes on the one hill and sometimes on the other ; and then we began to ascend the hot and rough and dreary road where begin the dangers of the way "from Jerusalem to Jericho;" —where the traveller enters among the fastnesses of the thieves who have infested the road from time immemorial. There is a hollow way which is considered the most dangerous of all. Here Sir Frederick Henniker

was stripped and left for dead by robbers in 1820. His servants fled and hid themselves on the first alarm. When they returned, he was lying naked and bleeding on the sultry road. They put him on a horse, and carried him to Jericho, where he found succour. Perhaps he was thinking of the parable of the Samaritan when this accident befel him. I was thinking of it almost every step of the way.—Another beautiful story was presently after full in my mind ;—a catholic legend which was told me by a German friend in America, when I little dreamed of ever being on the spot. Our road now gradually ascended the high ridge from which we were soon to overlook the plain of Jericho. The track was so stony and difficult as to make our progress very slow : and the white rocks under the midday sun gave out such heat and glare as made me enter more thoroughly into the story of Peter and the cherries than my readers can perhaps do. And yet the many to whom I have told the legend in conversation have all felt its beauty. It is this.

Jesus and two or three of his disciples went down, one summer day, from Jerusalem to Jericho. Peter,—the ardent and eager Peter,—was, as usual, by the Teacher's side. On the road on Olivet lay a horse-shoe, which the Teacher desired Peter to pick up, but which Peter let lie, as he did not think it worth the trouble of stooping for. The Teacher stooped for it, and exchanged it in the village for a measure of cherries. These cherries he carried (as eastern men now carry such things) in the bosom-folds of his dress.*

* “Good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom.”—Luke VI. 38.

When they had to ascend the ridge, and the road lay between heated rocks, and over rugged stones, and among glaring white dust, Peter became tormented with heat and thirst, and fell behind. Then the Teacher dropped a ripe cherry at every few steps ; and Peter eagerly stooped for them. When they were all done, Jesus turned to him, and said with a smile, “ He who is above stooping to a small thing, will have to bend his back to many lesser things.”

From the ridge, we had a splendid view of the plain of the Jordan. It lay, apparently as flat as a table, to the base of the Moab mountains opposite, and to the Dead Sea, to our right,—the south. The surrounding mountains were dressed in the soft hues which such an atmosphere alone can exhibit. The plain was once as delicious a region as ever men lived in. Josephus calls it a “divine region ;” and tells of its miles of gardens and palm groves. Here grew the balsam which was worth its own weight in silver, and was a treasure for which the kings of the East made war. Cleopatra sent a commission, to bring some balsam plants to Egypt. The whole valley or plain was studded with towns ; and every town was embosomed in verdure, as Damascus is now. Jericho was but one of a hundred neighbouring cities : but it was distinguished above others by the name of the City of Palm trees : and now, travellers dispute about where Jericho stood ! From our height, we saw a low square tower rising above some wood, a few miles off : and this tower is by many said to be the only remaining fragment of the old city : while others suppose its site to be at the base of the hills we were now on, and refer to Jericho the remains

of an aqueduct, and the walls and arches which are scattered about these bare and rocky eminences. The scene is indeed very desolate now. The plain is barren, except for the strip of verdure,—broad, sinuous, and thickly wooded,—which runs through the midst, marking the channel of the river. The palms are gone, and the sycamores, and the honey which the wild bees made in the hollows of their stems. The fruits and the sugar canes are gone; and instead of these, we now find little but tall reeds, thorny-acacias, and trees barren of blossom or fruit. The verdant strip is, however, beautiful from afar;—beautiful for itself, and because it indicates where the Jordan flows. It indicates too that the plain might still be fertile. Whenever men shall be living there who are wise enough, and free enough, to be friends with Nature, the plain may again be as rich as it once was.

The peculiarities of the plain of the Jordan are not such as can disappear within any moderate lapse of time, or be permanently affected by changes in the conduct of men. The natural features of the country have here, as in Egypt and elsewhere, much affected and determined the character and life of their inhabitants. The hills which inclose the plain, both to the east and west, have a much steeper and longer descent to the Jordan valley than on their outer sides. In other words, the valley is extraordinarily depressed. According to Russegger, the level of the Dead Sea is between 1300 and 1400 feet lower than the Mediterranean: and the supposed site of Jericho itself, 774 ft. The consequence of this depression of a well-watered district is that the plain has a tropical climate and

aspect ; and that its inhabitants had a tropical constitution and habits. They became, in course of time, by living among their cane-brakes and palm-groves, as unlike their brethren of the eastern tribes who led their flocks over the high table-lands, as if they had been of a different race. The history of the sinewy, well-braced, roving eastern tribes is therefore conspicuously different, throughout the Old Testament, from that of the soft and indolent dwellers in the valley. It is significantly remarked, in the History of the Hebrew Monarchy,* that “the actual rulers of the country appear at every time to have dwelt on the higher grounds.”

The descent was truly like a plunge into the tropics ; and for two days from that moment, we suffered more from the heat than, I think, during any part of our travels. The murkiness of the air was also remarkable : not only a steaming heat, but a heavy thickness which deadened the sun and the waters, and our spirits and breathing. This increased much as we approached the Dead Sea, the next day : but it was very perceptible from the moment we descended into the plain.

As I checked my horse on the summit, and looked over the plain, I could not help sending a searching gaze after the Jordan, though I well knew that it lay below three terraces,—“down in a hole,” as a recent visitor had told us. I could trace its course by the sinuous line of wood : but for the rest, I must wait another day.—There was another stream to be visited first. It may be remembered that, once upon a time, “the men of Jericho said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray

* A History of the Hebrew Monarchy, p. 5.

thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord seeth ; but the water is naught, and the ground barren : ” * and it may be remembered how the story goes on,—how Elisha healed the waters, that there should not be from thence any more death or barren land : and that “ the waters were healed unto this day.” Another strip of woodland marked the course of this spring of Elisha’s, about a mile, I think, from the base of the hills we were on. Here we were to encamp.

The descent was like an irregular stair-case : it was so steep that almost every one dismounted : but the heat was so excessive that I was disposed to keep my seat if possible. When I glanced up from the bottom, and saw the last of the party arrive on the ridge, and prepare to begin the descent, it looked so fearful that I was glad to turn away.

One of the most baseless traditions of the Holy Land adheres to this spot. The mountain immediately to our left in descending is supposed to be the Mount of Temptation. It was probably first fixed upon from its commanding the richest part of the country,—the best local example of “ the kingdoms of the earth, and the glory of them.” This mountain is called Quarantania. In its rocky face are square holes—the entrances of caves : and hither come, every year, devotees,—some from a great distance,—to dwell for forty days in this waste place, barely supporting themselves by such roots and herbs as they can find. Some of these caves are generally inhabited by the robbers who give such a bad name to the district.

We had not travelled far over the sands and among

* 2 Kings, II. 19.

the bushes of the plain, when we saw our tents pitched in the most delicious spot, beyond all comparison, that had yet occurred for our encampment. Till now, we had nowhere seen forest-scenery. Here it was,—on the banks of Elisha's stream,—now called Ain Sultān. The clear, rushing waters flowed away under the spreading branches of gnarled old trees; and there were thickets beyond, where the mules and horses could scarcely force their way. The green and golden sheeted lights, and broad shadows on the stream were to our eyes like water to the desert-traveller. “As You Like It” was in my head all day; for here was an exact realisation of my conception of the forest-haunts of Rosalind and Jaques. I need not say that it was equally unlike anything I had looked for in the Holy Land. Our tent was close upon the stream; but the heat was so excessive that we could not bear the tent, and had our dinner-table placed under a tree, whose roots were washed by the brook. Other parties of our comrades were dining, or lying on the banks of the stream: and the Arabs sat in groups near the tents. Every encampment of travellers in these wild places is beautiful: but I never saw one so beautiful as this.

After dinner, we went to the ruins, at the foot of Quarantania. In several directions, we saw traces of foundation walls; and on the hill side was the fragment of an aqueduct; and below, some vaulted recesses, remains of square edifices, and many strewn stones: but nothing to mark the site of a very ancient or extensive city.—The holes in the strata of the precipices looked so like Petra, that some of us wished to climb up to them: but the chief of our escort, the Sheikh of

the district, stepped in the way, barred the passage, and drew his sword across his throat, to convey that robbers were there. He told the dragoman that being responsible for our safety, he could let no one go to the caves.

I had before traced the stream up to its source,—about a quarter of a mile from our tent. The spring bubbled up under some bushes, and spread, clear and shallow, into a little pond, where some hewn stones were scattered about, seeming to show that the source had once been built over. When we returned from Quarantania, and the toils of the day were over, Miss —— and I stole away to the spring to bathe. We found each a drooping tree which made a close dressing-room; and I trusted to find some spot where the water was deep enough for our purpose. Under a tree, I found a pool chin deep; and there, in that quiet spot, where there was no sound but the rustle and dip of the boughs overhead, we bathed,—shaking off the fatigues of a hot and toilsome day. It was dusk when we came out, and a lustrous planet hung over the nearest hill.

The Eastern traveller feels a strong inclination to bathe in every sacred sea, river and spring. We had done it in Arabia; and now the interest grew as we visited places more and more familiar to our knowledge and imagination. How strong the interest is, and how like that of a new baptism, those at home may not be able to imagine; and such may despise the superstition which leads hundreds of pilgrims every year to rush into the Jordan. But, among all the travellers who visit the Jordan, is there one, however far removed

from superstition, who is willing to turn away without having bowed his head in its sacred waters ?

There was no moon to-night : but the stars were glorious when I came out of our tent to take one more look before retiring to rest. Here and there, the watch-fires cast yellow gleams on the trees and waters : but there were reaches of the brook, still and cool, where the stars glittered like fragments of moonlight. This day stands in my journal as one of the most delicious of our travels.

In the morning of the next day (April 6th) about five o'clock, I ascended a steep mound near our encampment, and saw a view as different from that of the preceding day as a change of lights could make it. The sun had not risen ; but there was a hint of its approach in a gush of pale light behind the Moab mountains. The strip of wood-land in the middle of the plain looked black in contrast with the brightening yellow precipices of Quarantania on the west. Southwards, the Dead Sea stretched into the land, grey and clear. Below me, our tents and horses, and the moving figures of the Arabs enlivened the shadowy banks of the stream.

We were off soon after six, and were to reach the Jordan in two hours and a half. Our way lay through the same sort of forest land as we had encamped in. It was very wild ; and almost the only tokens of habitation that we met with were about Rihhah,—supposed to be the site of the ancient Jericho. This is now as miserable a village as any in Palestine ; and its inhabitants are as low in character as in wealth. No stranger thinks of going near it who is not well armed and

guarded. What a change from the former days, when this was the garden of the known world,—this valley extending through the heart of Palestine ! Here, where we now saw only a few fig trees and a mere sprinkling of young crops,—here, where the luxuriance of the vegetation shows that the soil and climate are not to blame for the desolation,—here was once the crowded city which submitted to Joshua : here were the fields which fed whole armies of Syrians and Egyptians as they passed to and fro. And here, in a later day, as people sat abroad in the cool of the evening, every man under his own vine or his own fig tree, did news circulate from one neighbourly group to another which soon filled the whole valley. It had been for some time known that a young man,—very young to assume to be a prophet,—had been living in the Desert, a few miles to the south. He was probably a disciple of the Essenes, reared in their large community near the Dead Sea, and not very far from hence. The anchorites of that sect and district did not usually betake themselves to the hard life of the wilderness till their frames were strong to bear hunger, heat and cold. But this new preacher had hardly a beard upon his chin ; and his young face made him so little like the popular conception of a Hebrew prophet, that his claims were much discussed, and many went out to endeavour to meet him ; and under the trees here, at eventide, they reported what they had seen and heard.—What they had heard most about was Repentance ; a theme so old that men had become careless of it, and now needed a new awakening. Every Hebrew child knew, from his infancy upwards, that the Messiah would not come till

the nation had repented of its prevalent vices, and of every infidelity to Jehovah: and yet, though there was much expectation of the Messiah appearing before long, these words about repentance passed over the popular ear, without rousing the nation's soul; and it needed the appearance of one crying in the Desert to make them apprehend that the axe must be laid to the root of every wickedness among them. The doctrine preached was that of the Essenes;—that a man who had two coats and food enough should give to him that had none: that the tax-gatherers should be moderate, and exact no perquisites; and that the soldiers should cherish peace among their neighbours and contentment in themselves. The practice with which the prophet sanctified the resolutions of the penitent was also eminently Essene. It was common among all the Jews to baptize,—proceeding upon the words of their Prophets,—“ Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes :”—* “ then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean : from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you ; ”† —in literal obedience to such teachings, all the Jewish sects practised baptism: but none with such care and observance as the Essenes. The precepts and the practice were not new: but, given out now by a devout young prophet, worthy of the wild olden time, and at a season when every Hebrew mother looked upon her infant son as possibly the Messiah, there was abundant reason why the talk at eventide should be of this John. In the course of ten years, the curiosity and interest must

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* Isaiah, I. 16.

+ Ezekiel, XXXVI. 25.

have somewhat subsided ; but yet must, on the whole, have been the chief topic of the time. Many households, and a multitude of individuals, had no doubt reformed themselves, and were waiting, in the spirit of faith and the practice of purity, for the coming of a greater than the prophet. With these the interest would be fully kept alive. And the opulent citizens of the distant towns, passing this way to Jerusalem at the time of the Feasts, would stop to learn how they might find the new Prophet, and would return, grave because he had told them to give of their wealth to those who had none. The tax-gatherers, encountering him in their rounds, would depart rebuked, and hear the whisper among the people that the days for paying tribute would soon be over, when the Messiah should have driven out the Romans, and established his own kingdom upon Zion. And Herod's soldiers must have passed this way, going to and from Fort Machœrus on the Dead Sea ; and the exhortations to them would become known, and would be gratefully remembered by the rural inhabitants whom soldiers are wont to oppress. And the prophet himself would be seen at times, even in this fertile and peopled district. The cultivator, going out early to watch his field, in dread of the locust-swarm, now that the south-wind was strong, finding his fears too just, would see the prophet lighting his fire of green wood, to bring down the locusts, and save the neighbouring crops. And at noon-day, when the bees are all abroad, and man seeks the shade, the wayfarer, resting in the woods, would see the anchorite busy withdrawing the honeycomb from the bole of an old sycamore ; and the two would

draw near, and take their noon-tide meal together, and converse of him who should come: and then before night, how far would every word be known that the prophet had said!—Again, he must pass by this way to some of the stations on the Jordan where he was wont to baptise: and, though he had been occasionally seen for ten years, none could carelessly let him pass by.

At last, among the many who were allowed carelessly to pass by, among the peasants and artisans who inquired at this place where John was at that time baptising, came One, in appearance and lowliness like the rest, purposing to be baptised like them, and in fact for some time afterwards a disciple of the prophet. The dwellers here would not know for some months after that they had spoken with one greater than the anchorite of the Desert: and when they heard that another had risen up, whose disciples were baptising more converts than John, they would endeavour to remember what dignified personage, with his train, had here inquired the way, and let fall words of promise of his coming power and kingdom: and they would differ about which was he; and some would go forth to see him, and recognise him: and when they saw him, some would recal that countenance and voice; and most would go back when they found it was only a carpenter of Nazareth, asking how one so lowly, and so little prepared for war and conquest, should drive out the Romans, and restore the kingdom to Israel:—how it was possible for a teacher of the non-resistant doctrines of the Essenes, and for a poor inhabitant of the rural province of Galilee to set up a throne on Zion: and then ensued those domestic dissensions,—that parental

prejudice conflicting with youthful enthusiasm, which made the parent deliver over the child to destruction, and the child forsake the parent, and exhibited the truth that this Messenger of Peace had at first brought not peace but a sword. Here, in this rich district, peopled with indolent and luxurious inhabitants, had this stir begun and spread, which was never to cease till the plain of Jordan had become the waste that we saw it now. By degrees, the landmarks were destroyed and forgotten: the woods decayed, and no more were planted. The rains descended and the floods came, and swept away the dwellings; and none built them up again. The swallow made a nest for herself on the household altars, and the wild beasts came up at the swelling of Jordan: the sands swept over the field, and the salt gales from the southern lake encrusted the herbage, and poisoned the soil; and robbers of another race came to live in the caves of the hills, and made the passage to the Jordan as dreary and perilous as we saw it this day, while that Nazarene artisan came to be worshipped as a god over a wide continent, and in far islands of the sea. It was a vast chapter of human history which unrolled itself before us here beside the one remaining tower which is pointed out as marking the site of the ancient Jericho.

And now we were eager for the river, though, as I said before, we had been warned that we could not see it till it should appear flowing at our very feet. We were aware of our approach, by the three terraces we had to cross, which are distinctly marked. Each was level, and then a small slope led down to the next. On a hillock on the first terrace, where the vegetation

showed that here might once have been placed the flourishing home of some inhabitant of the valley, were perched a few birds among the brushwood; birds of such a size that one of our party thoughtlessly cried out "Ostriches!" There are no ostriches here: but these cranes might easily be mistaken for them. One by one they rose, flapping their great wings, and stretching out their long legs behind them, and sailed away towards the Dead Sea.

From the formation of the ground, as well as from some of the ancient language about Jordan, it appears as if the river had once been subject to inundations, which might have caused the exuberant fertility of the plain in former days: but it is not so now. The force with which it rushes down the descent from the Lake of Tiberias to the Dead Sea has, in course of centuries, so deepened its channel as that it rarely rises above its banks. It gushes along in its deep bed among the woodland, and now and then stands in among the stems of the trees: but it is not upon record that it has reached the second terrace in its fullest seasons; and its depth varies much in different years, as well as in different seasons of every year. Till we came to the brakes on its very banks, all was as dry as if no wave had ever touched it.

Our guides led us towards the spot which is cleared for the baptism of the Easter Pilgrims: and the first intimation which I had of our arrival was from some of the party dismounting at the Pilgrims' Beach. When I came up, O! how beautiful it was!—how much more beautiful than all pictures and all descriptions had led me to expect! The only drawback was that the stream

was turbid;—not only whitish, from a sulphureous admixture, but muddy. But it swept nobly along, with a strong and rapid current, and many eddies, gushing between the opposite limestone face and the woodland on our bank, now smiting the white rock, and now flowing in among the tall reeds, and now winding away out of sight behind the poplars and spreading acacias and sycamores of the promontories to the south. It is a narrow river; but it is truly majestic from its force and loveliness. The vigorous, upspringing character of the wood along its margin struck me much; and we saw it now in its vivid spring green.

The Pilgrims' Beach is a shelving bit of shore, kept bare for their approach: and here, with something like Arab “intensity,” they rush in in such numbers, and with so little precaution, that some are drowned every year. This year, it was spoken of as a remarkable circumstance that only one was drowned. It must be a fearful sight,—the old people carried away by the crowd and the current from their slimy footing near the shore, and the women and children from their hold upon the overhanging branches: and when once they are swept among the eddies, there is no chance for any but strong swimmers. Whatever superstition there might be in us, there was none of the wild kind which drives the Greek and Latin pilgrims thus headlong into the stream. We wished to bathe, but we did it in safety. The ladies went north; the gentlemen south. I made a way through the thicket with difficulty till I found a little cove which the current scarcely disturbed, and over which hung a sycamore whose lower branches dipped into the water. One might bathe here without

touching the mud which lay soft and deep beneath. The limestone precipice opposite, garlanded with weeds, and the wooded promontory which shot out below made the river particularly beautiful here ; and sorry I was to leave it when the time came for us to mount and proceed.

It is useless to attempt to make out where the baptism of Jesus took place, or where were the stations at which his disciples and John administered the rite. If there were monks on the spot, no doubt every locality would be specified with the utmost precision. Happily, the river flows on, free from any desecration of the kind. We had it to ourselves, and wished for nothing beyond what we saw. We know that the Glad Tidings once spread along its whole course, echoed from rock to rock, whispered from thicket to thicket, wherever there were human hearts on the watch : and the whole region is so sweet and sacred that we felt it enough to have touched the river in any point.

One thing more we did : we remembered friends at home, and in lands as far from home as home is from the Jordan. We carried away some of the water in tin cases provided for the purpose. This being done, we were summoned to horse, and rode away southwards to the Dead Sea.

The belt of woodland soon turned eastwards, and we found ourselves exposed to extreme heat, on a desolate plain, crusted with salt, and cracked with drought. There had been a closeness and murkiness in the air, all the morning, which was very oppressive ; and now it was, at our slow pace, almost intolerable. I put my horse to a fast canter, and crossed the plain as quickly

as possible, finding this pace a relief to my horse, as well as myself. One and another came galloping up, to obtain the same advantage, and our group reached the shore some time before the bulk of the party. The horses hastened to the bright clear water, and seemed to be deceived by its apparent freshness, for they put down their noses repeatedly, and as often drew back in disgust. The drift on the beach looked dreary enough : ridges of broken canes and willow twigs washed up, and lying among the salt, and the little unwholesome swamps of the shore. The scene was really solemn in its dreariness ; the retiring mountains on either hand being wholly bare,—of a dull gray with purple shadows,—hot and parched to the last degree. The curious lights which hung immovable over the surface of the waters struck me as showing an unusual state of the atmosphere,—the purple haze resting on one part, and the line of silvery refraction in another. Though the sky was clear after the morning clouds had passed away, the sunshine appeared dim ; and the heat was most oppressive.—I tasted the limpid water, which looked as if it could not be nauseous. I took only about two drops ; but I thought I should never again get rid of the taste. It is salt beyond all notions one can form of saltiness ; and bitter and fetid. And this is the water that poor Costigan's coffee was made of !

Costigan was a young Irishman, whose mind was set upon exploring the Dead Sea, and giving the world the benefit of his discoveries. It would have been a useful service ; and he had zeal and devotedness enough for it. But he wanted either knowledge or prudence ; and he lost his life in the adventure, without having left us any

additional information whatever. He sent a small boat overland, on camels' backs, to the Lake of Tiberias, and in this he set forth (in an open boat in the month of July !) with only one attendant—a Maltese servant. They followed the Jordan, entered the Dead Sea, and reached its southern end, not without hardship and difficulty. But the fatal struggle was in returning. The wind did not often favour them ; and once it blew such a squall that they threw overboard whatever came to hand : and the first thing that the servant threw over was their only cask of fresh water. They were now compelled to row for their lives, to reach the Jordan before they perished with thirst ; but the sun scorched them from a cloudless sky, and the air was like that of a furnace. When Costigan could row no further, his servant made some coffee from the water of the lake : and then they lay down in the boat to die. But the man once more roused himself, and by many efforts brought the boat to the head of the lake. They lay helpless for a whole day on that burning shore, unable to do more than throw the salt water over each other from time to time. The next morning, the servant crawled away, in hopes of reaching Rihhah, which he did with extreme difficulty. He sent Costigan's horse down to the shore, with a supply of water. The poor young man was alive ; and he was carried to Jerusalem in the coolness of the night. He was taken care of in the Latin convent there ; but he died in two days. During those hours of lingering, he never spoke of his enterprise ; and not a note concerning it was ever found among his effects. Any knowledge that he might have gained has perished with him ; and no

reliable information could be obtained from his servant. Costigan's grave is in the Armenian burying-ground ; and there I saw the stone which tells his melancholy story. He died in 1835.—Another victim to Dead Sea enterprise has perished since we were there,—I believe from drought and other hardship : and now there is a rumour of a new expedition for this year. It is difficult to imagine why it should not succeed, if the arrangements are made with any prudence. If a decked boat can really be conveyed to the Lake ; and if there are comrades enough in her to divide the labour and cheer each other ; and if they understand the management of a boat in a gusty lake, and are well supplied with provisions and water,—conditions indispensable to every enterprise of the kind,—one does not see why they should fail. I am not aware that any accidents have happened from the difficulty of the navigation of the Dead Sea, or from any singular causes of peril. The excessive heat may be avoided by choosing the most favourable season of the year ; and it must be possible to take provisions and water enough, supposing the Lake to be of the largest extent yet conjectured. Some modern scientific travellers, who have surveyed it from various surrounding heights, declare its length not to exceed thirty miles : while Josephus says it is $72\frac{1}{2}$, and Pliny 100 miles long. Its basin has probably contracted in length, in the course of ages.

There appears to be no satisfactory evidence as to whether any fish are to be found in the Dead Sea. Our guides said that some small black fish have been seen there ; but others deny this. A dead fish has been found on the shore near the spot where the

Jordan enters the lake ; but this might have been cast up by the overflow of the river. It is said that small birds do not fly over this lake, on account of the deleterious nature of its atmosphere. About small birds I cannot speak ; but I saw two or three vultures winging their way down it obliquely.—As for the quality of the water,—those of the gentlemen who stayed behind to bathe declared, on rejoining us at lunch time, that they had found the common report of the buoyancy of the water of this sea not at all exaggerated, and that it was indeed an easy matter to float in it, and very difficult to sink. They also found their hair and skin powdered with salt when dry. But they could not admit the greasiness or stickiness which is said to adhere to the skin after bathing. They were positive about this ; and they certainly did observe the fact very carefully. Yet I have seen, since my return, a clergyman who bathed there, and who declared to me that his skin was so sticky for some days afterwards that he could not get rid of the feeling, even from his hands. And Dr. Robinson says, “After coming out, I perceived nothing of the salt crust upon the body, of which so many speak. There was a slight pricking sensation, especially where the skin had been chafed ; and a sort of greasy feeling, as of oil, upon the skin, which lasted for several hours.”* The contrast of these testimonies, and the diversity which exists among the analyses of the waters which have been made by chemists, seem to show that the quality of the waters of the Dead Sea varies. And it appears reasonable that it should ; for it must make a great difference

* Biblical Researches, II. 213.

whether fresh waters have been pouring into the basin of the lake, over various soils, after the winter rains, or a great evaporation has been going on under the summer's sun. In following the margin of the sea, we had to cross a creek, where my skirt was splashed. These splashes turned presently to thin crusts of salt ; and the moisture and stickiness were as great a week afterwards as at the moment.

We wound among salt marshes and brakes, and round hillocks feathered with flowering reeds, and got into the bed of a stream, under the flecked shade of a shrub, to rest till the bathers overtook us. We were rather dismayed to find that we were still four or five hours from the convent of Santa Saba, where we were to stop for the night. The way was an almost continuous ascent, and in many parts a very steep one. We had to mount, from the deep depression of the valley of the Jordan, to some of the highest ground in Judea. We followed the ravine through which the Kedron runs (or did when it had any water) into the Dead Sea,—some of our party taking the right hand ridge and others the left. In a little while, the limestone hills below looked most fantastic,—completely answering to our idea of the abodes of the first Christian hermits. I wished we could have known where the great Essene establishment of the time of John was placed : but I hope it was in a spot less desolate than any now before our eyes. By degrees the Jordan valley opened northwards, and the Dead Sea southwards, till the extent traversed by the eye was vast. How beautiful it must have been once, when the Jordan valley, whose verdure was now shrunk to a black line amidst the sands, was

like an interminable garden, and when the cities of the plain stood bright and busy where the Dead Sea now lay blank and gray! As I looked back from a great elevation, I thought that so mournful a landscape, for one having real beauty, I had never seen.

I bade adieu many times over to the Dead Sea; for it reappeared unexpectedly again and again. Up and up we went, for four hours, over stony hills, and winding round the bases of others, and through defiles, and over stretches of table land, scantily grassed; and then up hills again, following tracks which were at times hardly perceptible; but from point to point catching a view of the Dead Sea, till we seemed to command its whole length. At last, it lay like a great pond among its hot mountains, its deep blue paled into a grey, with streaks of white light above it, wherever there was a dark back ground. It is a singular object from such an elevation.

The approach to the Convent of Santa Saba is wonderful. The tracks became so clear as to show that we were approaching water and habitations. They led now down to the dry bed of Kedron, and now up the sides of its ravine, till we entered upon a road cut out of the rock, and fenced with a wall of loose stones on the side next the gorge. This road overhangs the ravine for, I think, about two miles. The sides of the chasm are very precipitous; but the grassy ledges here and there show that they were once terraced: and fragments of walls near the innumerable holes in the rocks show the traveller that here he is in the midst of the haunts of the old anchorites. The monks say that ten thousand of them lived here: and

some old writers declare that there were fourteen thousand in Santa Saba's time. What a place to live in!—so hot and dreary at best, and most awful in tempest! In such storms as belong to this country, this gorge must be like the day of doom;—no room for the lightning, and the thunder rolling continuously, as the echoes will not let it die! Cyril, the Monk of Jerusalem, and John Damascenus, and Euphemius lived here; and here young devotees were sent, to try whether they could bear monastic life in its severest form.

Saint Saba was a monk of the fourth century, who had great powers of attraction, if, as is declared, he drew hither fourteen thousand anchorites, and enticed waters from the hard rock. There is a spring in a cavern at the bottom of the gorge which he created miraculously for the use of his followers in this parched region. The monks of his convent live under a very severe rule, never eating flesh, and mortifying their feelings of Christian compassion by never admitting any woman within their gates, under any stress of weather or other accident. There are handsome accommodations for gentlemen, I was told: but of course I did not see them. Mohammedans are almost as fearful as women to the monks of Santa Saba; and they cannot enter the convent without liability to a large fine. We knew this beforehand, and we therefore carried tents enough for the ineligible members of the party, while the gentlemen hoped to get lodgings within the walls.

It is an extraordinary place,—its buildings so plunging down the precipice as to make it difficult

to say how much of the mass is edifice, and how much natural rock. We dismounted on a platform before the great gate;—a gate substantial and secure enough to serve for the Bank of England. The platform was small, and dreadfully hot. Flies swarmed in the tents, where there seemed to be not a breath of air. Our fatigue to-day had been excessive; our travelling comforts ran short; and it did not add to our ease to be told that some Bedoueens were hanging about, and had stolen two of the horses of our escort. News soon came that the horses were recovered, and that two muskets belonging to the thievess had been taken and brought into our little encampment, where it seemed most likely that the owners would come for them in the night. One of the gentlemen advised me to take great care of my watch; which I would thankfully have done, if I had known how. Our Mohammedan servants, however, were delighted at the opportunity of protecting the Christian ladies; and our dragoman lay down at one end of our tent, and the cook at the other, begging us to feel quite secure. One gallant youth of the company would not enter the convent while his mother and sister remained outside: and, there being no room for him in their tent, he spent the night on the hard rock,—actually on an exposed shelf of rock,—with his pistols and dagger on each side of him. All were glad, I believe, when the morning came, and we could ride away from flies and ants, and heat, and monks too holy to be hospitable, except to gentlemen who need it least.

This convent is said to be in possession of many MSS., some of which are inestimable. All I could

learn of these was that the monks permit Turks to look at them, but neither Jews nor Christians; an arrangement which appears strangely at variance with that which makes it so difficult for Mohammedans to enter the building.—After we had left the place, we were told that a sort of outhouse,—a square building on a rock, was open to women, if they chose to rest there: but we did not know this in time to compare its accommodations with those of the tent.

Our three hours' ride to Jerusalem was delightful. The road led over the hills, and was seldom far away from the bed of Kedron. There is no finer view of Jerusalem than one from a hill side on this route, whence it appears perched on a height which seems incredible, while the intervening ground is concealed by the nearer eminences. In the valley of the Kedron, approaching the ancient Tophet, the cultivation was very rich,—gardens, and groves of figs, oranges, pomegranates and olives abounding. We passed Job's well, and under the rock caves of the valley of Gihon, and below the mournful Aceldama, and entered Jerusalem by the Jaffa gate, after an excursion full of interest and profit.

CHAPTER V.

JERUSALEM.—CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.—VALLEY OF GIHON.—POOL AND FOUNTAIN OF SILOAM.—TOMBS OF THE PROPHETS.—MOUNT OF OLIVES.—GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE.—TOMBS OF THE KINGS.—GOVERNOR'S HOUSE.

I HAD avoided going to the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Easter week, as I said before; but it was necessary to see it before leaving Jerusalem. I was relieved to find how easy it is to look at it as a mere sight: and but for what I witnessed within the walls, I should not have supposed that an educated person of any Christian denomination could have found his religious feelings involved in such a spectacle. To think of Christ and Christianity in the midst of this church is like having a reverie of sunrise from a mountain-top when one is looking at a puppet-show. One is called away from contemplating that light that lightens the Gentiles and is the glory of Israel, to look at such fabulous shows as it is a sin to put before the peasant and the infant. Yet here are grown men, conducting the display, apparently in earnest; and some who ought to know better giving that devout heed to what they say which is in truth the deepest irreverence. What a puppet-show is this place compared with the temples

where I had seen the sculptured Osiris, armed with the symbols of Justice and Judgment, executing his function upon the dead ! How noble are the traditions of Osiris, how calm and pure the records of his life and doctrine, compared with the dreadful things which are here said of a greater than Osiris ;—said on a spot within view of the Temple courts where he taught his simple doctrine, and the Mountain where he passed his holy hours ! The only thing to be done in such places as this church is to put aside entirely the Christianity with which one is familiar, and look at what is before one's eyes as one would look upon the ceremonies of the Joss-house in China, or the exhibition of Medicine-Mystery at the Falls of the Mississippi. The pain of it is in all this going on in such a locality, and in the very name of the locality.

The greater part of this church is as like as need be to a heathen temple, but without its grace. In grace, though not in gorgeousness and glitter, the shrines of Astarte in the time of Jezebel must have surpassed this idol-temple, profanely called by the name of Christ. From seeing the lamps, and marbles, and shining metals, and altars, and the chapels of the Latins, Greeks and Armenians, we were led to the nucleus of the building and its interests,—the pretended sepulchre. Here, under one roof, we were shown the garden-tomb, with the stone on which the announcing angel stood ; the place of the cross,—Mount Calvary being a staircase of twenty-two steps,—and about a dozen sacred places, curiously disposed in an exact circle, a few feet distant from each other. Those who, looking at the city from the Mount of Olives, can believe this ever to

have been the site of Calvary, or of the tomb in the adjacent garden, may believe in this circular scene of sacred events. In the absence of all knowledge where Golgotha was, it would require something better than any existing evidence to prove that, as it was certainly outside the city, it could have been on the lower slope of Acra, close by the ravine between Acra and Moriah which was filled up by the Asmonean princes; a spot almost in the centre of the city, as it was both before and after the time of Christ.—As for the Calvary, the sockets of the three crosses are shown so close together that there could have been no room for them to stand, except one behind another. The rending of the rocks must of course be displayed on the same spot;—a fissure cased with marble. And, as the apostle Paul says that “as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive,” the head of Adam was found in this fissure beside the cross. The pillar of scourging is brought here, and shown through an aperture. The monks admit that this pillar has been shifted, with the same honesty with which their predecessors admitted to Dr. Richardson that the stone which assumes to have once closed the mouth of the sepulchre is a substitute for the real one; the Armenians having stolen the latter, to exhibit at their convent on Mount Zion.

I have before mentioned that neither Jew nor Mohammedan could enter this building with safety to life,—except on the set festival occasions when Turkish guards are wanted, and the Governor of Jerusalem has to keep the Latin and Greek Christians from tearing one another's throats. No one will wonder that the Jews do not desire to enter this idolatrous temple: but

it is remarkable that the Mohammedans do not, so devoutly as they usually pay homage to the sacred places of the prophets, from Abraham to Christ. The reason in this instance is curious. They do not believe in the sepulchre, because they do not believe in the death of Jesus. They hold that he ascended alive into heaven, leaving the likeness of his face to Judas, who was executed. They think it probable that the body of the crucified Judas may have been laid here: so they would carefully keep away, even if they had the freest liberty to enter; and they ridicule the mistake of the Christians who pay their homage at the shrine of the traitor. How like the disputes of Fetish worshippers all this is! and how wholly alien from all our conceptions of that devotion which Jesus taught and practised!

The circle of sacred places has to be made out by some bold stretching, of course: so we were shown the stocks in which the feet of Jesus were put. When we reached the place where the soldier who struck Jesus came to repent, we all laughed,—the device was so exquisitely innocent! Yet even these things are not too much for some people, educated in England, who vie with these monks themselves in superstition. A lady stood in a solemn attitude, with folded arms and bowed head, while we examined the Calvary. When we moved on, she threw back her veil, and we recognised in her an English lady, now a Russian Countess, whom we met daily at the table d' hôte at Cairo. With a most extraordinary gesture, she cast aside her veil, threw open her arms, prostrated herself at the altar, and not only covered the place of the cross with kisses, but laid her head into the socket. I could look no

longer, and hastened away to see the one truly interesting thing in the church.

The tombs of Godfrey of Bouillon and his brother Baldwin were once shown here ;—sarcophagi on small marble pillars. It is said that the Greeks destroyed them ; and we could find only the place where these heroes were said to have been buried. Two stone seats were called the tombs ; but we understood them as merely pointing out the locality. The inscription on Godfrey's tomb is worth preserving, at the risk of some repetition. It is this :

“ *Hic jacet inclitus Dux Godefridus de Bulion, qui totam istam terram acquisivit cultui Christiano ; cuius anima regnet cum Christo. Amen.*”

His sword and spurs were here,—relics, of whose genuineness there is no reason to doubt. When I handled them, I was glad I had come. The sword is not very heavy,—plain, and with a hilt which seemed to us to suit rather a small hand.

In the area in front of the church, there is always a little market of beads, crucifixes, carved shells, &c.; and here the beggars collect, alarming the stranger into giving alms, under penalty of contact with their clothes. The dragoman had to lay about him with a stout stick before we had any peace.

Our refreshment while in this heathen metropolis of Christendom was in our walks in the environs. While wandering among the great natural objects,—the valleys, pools, and hills which superstition cannot meddle with or disguise, all was right, and we could recognise for ourselves the haunts of Jesus, and enter into his thoughts.—We went out by the Bethlehem-

gate, and along the Valley of Hinnom or Gihon. Here, and down to the junction of this ravine with the Valley of Jehoshaphat, at the ancient Tophet, were once the idol-groves and shrines where, in the days of Solomon, the worship of Jehovah was joined with that of the lingering deities of the prior inhabitants. Here, in later days, did Jezebel and her royal train come forth to their festivals, and see the fires lighted in honour of Moloch, where children were passed through the flames, as a sort of charm, like that which subsists to this day among the peasantry of some Catholic countries. Here, in a yet later day, were kept up smouldering fires which consumed the dead bodies of malefactors and garbage, making the ravine that accursed place “where the worm died not, and the fire was not quenched;”—the place which was to the Hebrews the image of hell: and overhanging it, on the opposite hill, was the Potter’s Field, where strangers were buried; and for so long a course of time, that many bones are still crumbling there. The groves and gardens of the idolaters are gone; the harp and tabret (Toph, from which came the name of Tophet) which drowned the cries of the children and exalted the mirth of the revellers, are now never heard there. The bodies of criminals, thrown there to stigmatise the scene of idolatry, and the filth of the city, have ages since, been swept away by torrents which have themselves disappeared, having brought down earth which now yields food to man. The worm is dead and the fire is quenched; and there remain only the empty sepulchres, yawning in the red rock, and the desolate Aceldama on the hill. The soil washed down by the winter rains is detained by

terracing, and made to yield thin crops of wheat and barley, and to support a few scattered olive trees. Further down, at the confluence of the old torrent and Kedron, the soil is deeper, and rich enough to encourage a full cultivation. There, thickets of pomegranate and orange refresh the eye, and lead one to look round for the pools from which they are watered.

The first we meet is the Well of Job, as it is now called; though it need not be explained that there is no more reason for supposing the ancient Arab Job to have been here than at any place in Europe. The Franks call it the Well of Nehemiah, which is more reasonable. This well was sounded by Pococke, and found to be 122 feet deep: yet it sometimes overflows. What a treasure this must always have been to the city, and what an object to its besiegers, is clear. Turning up to the left, towards the Valley of Jehosaphat, we came next to the Pool of Siloam, whose waters run off to fertilise the gardens at the junction of the valleys. This pool is fed from a spring above, by a channel in the rock. Its form is that of an oblong square, and it has the beauty which belongs to all ancient buildings here,—the crumbling stone, and tufts and garlands of weeds. The pool which is usually called the Fountain of Siloam, further on, is more beautiful, from its waters lying in the deep shadow of the rock. We went down into a cave, and by a descent of broad wet steps, cut in the rock, to the dim pool, where an Arab woman was washing clothes,—her picturesque figure adding not a little to the beauty of the scene. This water was not used for drinking in former times, nor is it now. It was used, in the time

of the Temple, for ablution by the priests, before flowing down in the rock to this cave ; and it has been since so traditionally employed as we saw it to-day, that both Monks and Mohammedans say it was there that the Virgin washed her son's linen. It was at the pool, and not this spring, that the blind man was supposed to have washed : and the spring must have been held pure in the days when the priest came down from the Water-gate above, with his golden ewer, to fetch water for the Temple service.

Then we crossed the bed of Kedron, and began to ascend the slope of Olivet, under the excavated tombs. After mounting the steep ascent by a zig-zag path for some way, we were led into a barley-field, through the midst of the corn, towards a group of olive trees, among whose roots was an entrance into a cave, where we should least have looked for one. Lighted candles were put into our hands, and we went in to explore. It appeared to us an extraordinary place, and we wondered that we had heard no more of it. We had heard of the Tombs of the Kings, and the Tombs of the Judges, but not of these Tombs of the Prophets. We well knew that this old valley had been watered with the blood of the prophets, as too often with the tears of true-hearted Hebrews : we felt as if we trod upon their dust wherever we turned at the foot of this Mount : but it was a surprise to be told that we were actually standing in their sepulchre. Whether this is likely to be true, we did not know : but there can be no doubt of this being a place of sepulture. Many passages diverged from the entrance : and though there were no inscriptions, nor other express guidance, the recesses

and niches showed plainly enough that these caverns, reached by a mere hole among the olive-roots, had been an abode of the dead.

Then we went up (and not for the only time) to the summit of Olivet, which is really a long and toilsome walk from the city, and not a mere ascent of a gentle slope, as we had always at home supposed. The Convent of the Ascension stands on this ridge; and a family lives on the spot, to keep and show the Mosque which covers the foot-print of Christ,—the spot from which he sprang from the earth! The other is in the Mosque of Omar. It seemed hard to encounter this idolatrous nonsense in such a place: but the Mount is high and wide; and elsewhere our feelings might remain undisturbed.—We ascended the minaret, the second time we came here, for the sake of the view: and there is no other to be compared to it. We commanded the whole city, as it lay on the opposite summit; and a truly noble city it looked. Every cupola, and almost every stone was distinct to the eye through that pellucid atmosphere, and the whole mass absolutely glittered against the clear sky. We could follow out by the flat roofs the narrow winding streets, and mark the extent of the many unoccupied spaces now laid waste, but where there was once “prosperity within her palaces.” How glorious must the Temple buildings have looked from here, towering over the Valley of Kedron, and the gilded roof of the Sanctuary flashing in the sun! We could now see, as on a preceding Friday, the gay groups scattered about the green lawns of the Mosque of Omar. Of old, other groups might have been seen there, among the

colonnades of the temple courts;—the gentiles in their court; the money-changers and market people in the outer range,—the women going up with their offerings, and the priests passing to and fro on their services. This was a sight too for the Roman soldiers who might come up hither from the encampment of their legion below. They would see the smoke of the sacrifice curling up into the clear evening sky; and the watchman relieving guard upon the walls. If the breeze blew hitherward, they might possibly hear the challenge of the sentinels: and at all events, the glorious martial music of the Hebrews,—the full swell of their wind instruments,—a music beyond compare for rousing valour or devotion,—would come on the night wind, to thrill or soothe the souls of the very foe. This was the spot for seeing how the Lion of Judah stood at bay with the hunters. From hence spread a wide view of that country, rich from side to side,—from where the Dead Sea glittered in the morning sun, and the plain of Jordan spread like a garden, on the east, to where, on the west, the pastures were clothed with flocks, and the hills teemed with corn and oil and wine,—that rich country which the Hebrews might have enjoyed in luxury, if they could have remained submissive to Rome. But that country lay almost deserted during the siege, because the inhabitants had gone up to Jerusalem to the Feast, and were shut in by the foe, and would not yield. Far away stretched the fruitful fields, and the young lambs were abroad without a shepherd; and here at hand, within these city walls, was the mother slaying her sucking child for food! Here, while baited, exhausted, pierced on every

side, did the Lion of Judah stand at bay with the hunters.

This is not, however, the spot from which, according to tradition, Jesus pronounced the doom of the city. That spot is a little way down the hill; and it is marked by the ruins of a small convent. It might have been the place; for it commanded the Temple buildings, and a fine view of the city. The lamentation commemorated here was not that invocation to Jerusalem, as the destroyer of the prophets, which is usually called the weeping of Christ over Jerusalem. That touching lament was uttered in the temple, at the close of a denunciation of the Pharisees. It was in leaving the Temple,—that Temple of Herod which was new within the memory of the generation who heard him, and of which the nation was proud,—that the disciples pointed out to him “what manner of stones and of buildings” were there, and that he intimated the ruin that must come. They passed the gates, crossed the brook, and “sat upon the Mount of Olives over against the Temple :” and then the disciples asked him privately what was the ruin which he had foretold.

To this incident we owe the clearest exposition we are in possession of, of the belief and doctrine of Jesus in regard to his kingdom. That it was a spiritual kingdom, not to be won by war, and not limited to the expulsion of the Roman power from Palestine, or the mere re-establishment of the Mosaic system in its purity under a Jewish monarch, had long been evident. But from this moment, it was made clear what his expectation was, as understood by his followers, and recorded by those who some years afterwards wrote his history for the informa-

tion of the world.* Luke, in addressing Theophilus, undertakes to review and consolidate, from the many written accounts circulated at the time of his history,† the narrative and expositions which exhibit the facts and teachings of Christ; and he delivers to us, somewhat less at large than Matthew and Mark, what it was that Jesus declared on this occasion, concerning the approaching establishment of his kingdom: and that the expectation now sanctioned was entertained by the disciples throughout the existing generation, we know from the distinct statements of Paul (1 Thessalonians, IV. 13—18). The kingdom of Christ was to come in that generation, by the destruction of the existing world, when not only the Temple should be overthrown, but the powers of the world and the frame of nature. There was to be a new heaven and a new earth: Christ was to come, attended by the risen dead and by heavenly beings; and those of his followers who remained alive were to meet him in the air, and be rendered immortal without the intervention of death.‡ A spiritual kingdom was to be established which should supersede the Law: but the Law was to be carefully maintained till then. He did not come to overthrow the Law and Prophets; but to fulfil them. His present mission was to restore the Mosaic system to its purity; to rebuke the legal pedantry of the Pharisees, and discountenance their preference of the oral Law over the written; to revive the soul and spirit of the Mosaic dispensation, in preparation for its abolition and his second coming.§

* Matt. XXIV. XXV.; Mark, XIII.; Luke, XXI. † Luke, I. 1—4.

‡ Matt. XXIV. 30, 31; Mark, XIII. 26, 27; Luke, XXI. 27; 1 Thessalonians, IV. 15—17. § Matt. V. 17—20.

After that second coming, his immediate followers were to be the Judges of his kingdom, sitting on twelve thrones, to judge the tribes of Israel.* Of the precise time when this should happen, he declared that he knew nothing. God alone knew this: but he himself could say only that that generation should not pass away till all this was fulfilled.†—When that generation had passed away, and the destruction was found to be limited to the conquest of the land and nation by the Romans, the record of what was said on this spot on Olivet was naturally referred to a still future coming of Jesus: and it is known that this expectation troubled the Church and its rulers for some centuries, though, through the junction of the Oriental and Jewish philosophers, and the spread from Alexandria of a Platonising Christianity, a more and more definite reference of this discourse to a still future state of the human soul, excluding the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, gained ground. In ages when the study of the Sacred Records was confined to a small number of readers, and when those readers were of a class whose minds were sophisticated by the converging philosophies and superstitions of many nations and times, it may not be wonderful that so plain a statement of the expectations of Christ,—or of his recorders' understanding of them,—should have been slighted or perverted: but now that the records are in the hands of all men, and that men are learning that the Scriptures are records and not oracles, it seems impossible that there should be much more dispute about as clear and plain a statement as ever was penned.

* Matt. XIX. 28.

† Matt. XXIV. 34, 36; Mark, XIII. 30; Luke, XXI. 32.

No one spot of the Holy Land can be more interesting to a pilgrim than this. There can be no doubt of the incidents recorded. It is a narrative which could not have been written but from the life. In many other parts of the narratives selected for the use of the world from the great number written in the first generation, we have to remember and consider well the position and minds of the writers, the lapse of time during which fresh ideas had been flowing in upon them, and the colour their narratives must inevitably take from the character of the people for whom they were written, in order to see as the writers saw, and to deduce from their various statements the intermediate truth by which we must abide. In general, it is no light work for the sincere and reverent mind to read the gospel history, so as to come within reach of the actual voice of Jesus, and listen to it among the perplexing echoes of his place and time;—to separate it from the Jewish construction of Matthew,—the traditional accretions and arrangements of Mark and Luke,—and the Platonising medium of John;—a care and labour which it is profane and presumptuous to omit or make light of: but in this instance, the record is clear, and bears its historical truth upon the face of it. After his most vehement denunciations of the Pharisees and their teachings, as the vitiators of the Law and the oppressors of the people, Jesus was leaving the Temple. His companions pointed out to him the grandeur and solidity of this new edifice, of which every religious Jew was proud. He, believing the end of the existing world to be near, observed aloud how little this grandeur and solidity would avail.

His disciples, perplexed, and unable to explain his meaning, came and inquired of him, as he pursued his way up the Mount of Olives. He sat down here, over against the Temple, at the point whence its buildings looked most magnificent, and repeated his declaration that it would be overthrown. From this he went on to say much of the time and the object ; that it should be within the existing generation, after much war and political convulsion, and in order to the establishment of the Messiah's kingdom :—a kingdom so spiritual as that the dead should rise and reign with him. He went on to declare the process and terms of this admission * of the dead to his kingdom, promising to own and admit the watchful, the pure, the faithful, the charitable,—those who should adhere to him in difficulty and danger, who should visit the sick, the poor and the prisoners, and who should keep up a steady watch for his coming ; and to disown and reject the careless, and cowardly and heartless. It is an affecting moment for the pilgrim who stands on that spot, with the same ground under his feet, and the same hill of Moriah before his eyes, when he surveys at once the three periods of time concerned ;—the imposing, calm and prosperous aspect of the scene when the disciples asked that pregnant question : the tumult when the Temple was burning, and the hopes of the world seemed to be carried away in the smoke of the conflagration ; and the present time, when a partial phase of Christianity has succeeded, under the name of a new prophet, and all looks outwardly dead, while the kingdom of Christ has actually come in a

* Matt. XXV.

better manifestation than that of thrones,* and new wine,† and a heavenly Jerusalem,—in the new heavens and new earth of the regenerated human mind.

Descending the Mount, we came to a place of a different but very deep interest. We cannot be sure that the inclosure pointed out as the garden of Gethsemane is the precise spot: but I believe there is no reason why it should not be. It was the custom of Jesus to spend the night out of Jerusalem ‡ at the time of the Feasts; and this place was in his accustomed track; and it corresponds well with the particulars told of the approach of his captors. Gethsemane is now most forlorn. It is an inclosure of nearly 200 feet square, where we found nothing but eight extremely old olive trees, which are kept standing only by little terraces of heaped stones built up about their roots. How old these hoary, shattered, straggling trees may be, we could not learn. No one seems to know what age the olive may attain. Of course, there is a desire to suppose them to be the identical trees under whose shade Jesus sat; or, at least, suckers from their roots: but I suppose it will not be seriously maintained that olive trees really live through eighteen centuries. It is enough to imagine that here was once a shade, whether of pomegranate, vine, and fig, or of an olive grove, where the Teacher came to rest from the sorrows of the city or the glare of the valley. If here he also sustained the anguish of relinquishing life so soon after the beginning of his course,—in such early days of his life and his mission,—before his followers

* Matt. XIX. 28. † Matt. XXVI. 29; Mark, XIV. 25; Luke, XXII. 30.

‡ Luke, XXI. 37.

had comprehended the spiritual character of his kingdom, or the nation had taken into its heart the living faith that Jehovah their King was their Father and the Father of all men, this place is indeed the most **sacred** shrine of human sorrow ! I am glad to have seen it ; to know how the shades of evening gathered about him at the foot of the Mount ; and how it was that he saw the multitude issue from the city gate, and come down the steep hill-side road, with their torches flaring, and their arms glittering in the yellow blaze. Step by step, he must have seen them approach,—out of the city, down the hill, over the brook, and up to the garden, where he came forth from under the trees to meet them, asking them why they came with tumult and arms, when it was never his way to conceal himself or to resist.

We haunted this valley more than any other spot in or near Jerusalem : and at different times visited all the objects interesting to a traveller, except the Tomb of the Virgin (so called by the monks.) We knocked at the gate more than once, but the knock was never answered ; and we felt no concern at this, for the place is one of no religious interest. We went among the more conspicuous sculptured tombs in the Valley of Jehoshaphat ;—those named after Absolom, Jehoshaphat, Zachariah, and St. James ; and one day, we found our way above and through the village of Siloam. There is no tower there now, to fall on men's heads. It is a very poor village, whose inhabitants look wild enough : but still, there is a grandeur about it, as there is about all such places, from the substantial character of the building.—We went, of course, to the Tombs of the Kings, to the north of the city. The entablature here,

sculptured with fruit and flowers, is considered the most elegant work of art in or about Jerusalem. It has an air of incongruity, however, a modernness, which prevented our feeling much interest about it ; while, as a tomb, the interior was so like an imitation on a small scale of what we had seen in Egypt, without explanatory remains, that a cursory look satisfied us. Dr. Robinson conjectures* this to be, as Pococke had before suggested, the tomb of the Empress Helena, who is known to have elaborated a fine sepulchre for herself at Jerusalem. The position of this tomb is striking ;—in a deep trench, and accessible only by an arch in a rock partition between two sunk areas : but within we found mere square chambers, with fragments of pannelled doors, and sarcophagi, very narrow, modern looking, and (at least, one) covered with small sculpture,—flowers and fruit.

We asked permission to go to the top of the Governor's house, for the sake of obtaining the best view that can be had from without of the Mosque of Omar. This palace is actually on the site of Fort Antonia ; and it was strange to look down from it into the Temple inclosure, and think that both Temple and palace are preserving their function in such changed hands.—We were seated on the roof with much civility, and coffee was sent us : and we took our time about this last gaze upon Moriah. The Mosque and its appurtenances are truly very fine ;—gay and graceful in its elaborate structure ; and the springing arches of the avenues to its platform ; and the arcades round the circuit walls, where the priests' houses are ; and the row of cypresses,

* Biblical Researches, I. 536.

with worshippers at prayer beneath them,—every incident conveying the sense of the cheerfulness and lightness of a ritual and predestinarian religion. As we were turning into the Governor's house, and I had my thoughts full of Pilate and his dreaming wife, and Peter at the fire below, and the scenes which passed in the Judgment Hall, the voice of the Muezzin calling to prayer fell upon my ear. He was in the gallery of the minaret close at hand, at the corner of the inclosure of the Mosque of Omar. The pathetic cry sounded over the space, and thrilled on the unaccustomed ear ; but how much less moving and sweet is it than another summons once heard here,—the call to the “weary and heavy-laden” !

On the last week-day, we were much in the bazaars, making purchases in preparation for our long ride to Damascus. Four soldiers and a citizen came to help us in our bargaining, which made it very amusing. Neither they nor any one else seemed to have anything to do ; and we saw them to great advantage,—playing with snakes on the shop-board, or smoking, or simply staring at us. While my companions were groaning over the hardships of the pavement, I felt that I would not exchange the beauty of the streets for any pavement whatever. The eye was gratified at every turn by the deep arches, vaults, interiors, weedy old walls, the very handsome people, the black shadows, and pencils or floods of light.

We spent that Saturday evening very pleasantly at the Consul's, meeting some members of the Mission, the extraordinary old lady who took such good care of herself on board the steamer on the Mahmoodieh

Canal, and a party of officers from the English brig Harlequin, then lying off Beyrout. From these officers we heard a world of European news, after our long wandering in African and Asian deserts ; and in one of them I found a member of a family of old friends in my native city. It was strange enough, after talking over old Norwich and its ways, and the state of the dying O'Connell, and various doings in Parliament, to walk home through the streets of Jerusalem, and see the moon hanging above the Mount of Olives.

Our last day, Sunday, was very quiet. We walked only to the church : but we took a ride towards Bethlehem, to try our new horses ;—the horses which carried us to Damascus first, and afterwards over the Lebanon, and down to Beyrout. My chesnut mare was the best of the lot. I liked her much to-day ; but I was desired not to set my heart upon her, as there was no security for my ever seeing her again. If any one should, within twenty hours, bribe the owner, I might be put off with some sorry beast that would spoil my pleasure.—Next morning, however, there she was ; and we never parted again till I had to leave the saddle for the steamer : and she carried me perfectly well the whole way.

We were glad to have one more view of Bethlehem, which we had not expected to see again. We rode as far south as the convent of St. Elias ; and thence Bethlehem looked well on its hill promontory, commanding the plain towards Moab.

The next morning, April 12th, we set forth for Samaria.

CHAPTER VI.

SAMARITANS.—SIMON MAGUS.—WAYSIDE SCENERY.—
JACOB'S WELL AT SYCHAR.—SAMARITAN SYNAGOGUE.—SEBASTE.—DJENEEN.

IT was no light event to be setting forth for Samaria,—to be leaving the kingdom of Judah for that of Israel. What we had to bear in mind in this expedition was briefly this.

Samaria was given to the posterity of Joseph. It was inhabited by the tribe of Ephraim and half that of Manasseh. David and Solomon reigned over Israel and Judah united. After them, the kingdoms were separated, and Shechem or Sychar, now Nablous, already a very ancient city, was made the capital of the kingdom of Israel. We were going now among the haunts of Elijah and Elisha; and over the places where the worship of Baal and Ashtaroth reached its utmost splendour, under the influence of the zeal of Jezebel, who brought in the gods of her native region to vie with the God of Israel. We were approaching the meeting point of the religious and other ideas of the Egyptians who came up in alliance, and the Syrians who came hither from Damascus through the great valley of the Lebanon, sometimes in friendship, and sometimes in enmity. To this rendezvous of peoples

and ideas, the Assyrians also came, and wrought more powerfully on the mind of the Samaritans than even the Egyptians and the Syrians. The inhabitants of Samaria had before been of mixed race, worship, and character of mind ; and when their ablest men were carried away to Nineveh, and colonised in Assyria, and Assyrians were left in their places, to intermarry with the native women, and establish themselves in the towns and fields of Samaria, it is no wonder that the Jews dreaded intercourse with them as a mongrel and half-idolatrous race, and refused to let them assist at the re-building of the Temple at Jerusalem. If the Samaritans wished to hold to the Law of Moses, and to worship Jehovah, and yet were excluded from assisting to re-build the Temple at Jerusalem, it is no wonder that they built a temple for themselves on Mount Gerizim : and again, if the Jews wished to preserve any appearance of unity of race and faith, it is no wonder that they refused to have any dealings with a people who had for generations intermarried with heathens, and regarded Jehovah as only the chief of several gods. And if the Jews believed it essential, as they now did, that there should be but one altar of Jehovah, it is no wonder that they regarded with horror the building of the temple on the mountain. It was natural, again, that lax-minded Jews, who had broken the Law, by marrying heathen wives and otherwise, and who yet wished to worship Jehovah in his temple, should resort to Sychar, to join the Samaritans,—thus rendering their race yet more mixed. Here were causes enough for there being “no friendly dealings” between the Jews and the Samaritans.—But

there was besides, the quarrel about their Scriptures,—each people charging the other with having falsified the texts about the mountains Ebal and Gerizim, and each claiming to hold the true copy of the Pentateuch.—The quarrel had been fierce for above five hundred years before the time of Christ. How many suns had gone down upon the wrath of these neighbours, who claimed the same origin and the same God! It was bitter in proportion to its duration, and to the close connection of the foes: so that it was only natural that the people of a Samaritan village should refuse to permit Jesus to rest there,* because his face was turned to Jerusalem; and that James and John should ask for the destruction of this village by fire from heaven. And how beautiful was the rebuke! What an exemption from Jewish prejudice and human anger was there in the reply which showed that a greater than Elias was here;—one whose mission was not one of vengeance but of redemption;—who came, “not to destroy men’s lives, but to save them!” How soothing and uniting was the declaration that the old quarrel about the place of worship was to be left behind and forgotten;—that henceforth worship need be confined neither to the Mountain nor Jerusalem, but should be universal,—in spirit and in truth!—And how were rebuke and charity combined in the parable, when the good works of the alien Samaritan were exalted above the official sanctity of the Priest and of the servant of the Temple at Jerusalem!

And then, coming down lower than the time of Christ, a great interest attaches to Samaria. The Book

of Acts (ch. viii.) tells how freely the country people of Samaria accepted the gospel, and were received into its fellowship, on the preaching of Philip: and several of the Fathers give us very curious and interesting accounts of the False Christ whose dealings with the apostles are briefly related in that chapter of the Acts. Irenæus, Origen, and Eusebius give copious accounts of this Simon; in the reading of which, however, it is necessary to remember the bias under which they wrote.—It appears that two false Christs, conspicuous above all others, arose, as Eusebius says,* immediately after the ascension of Jesus, claiming to be gods, but in reality, actuated by devils:—these were Simon of Samaria, and Apollonius of Tyana. With the latter, we have nothing to do: but Simon is an interesting historical personage to those who follow the footsteps of Jesus and the Apostles through Samaria.

Simon was half a Jew, of the class of the Speculatists, and the person who, bringing the doctrines of the East into connexion with those of the Jewish sects, founded, not directly and purposely, but by the spread of his tenets, the schools of the Gnostics, to which may be traced many of the corruptions with which Christianity is overlaid to this day. When the apostles visited Samaria, they found Simon in great power and activity. His Samaritan hearers listened eagerly to his attacks upon the great prophets of the Jews;—even upon Moses himself. They exalted his miracles, told of his power of raising the dead, and, as Eusebius says, regarded him with great reverence, as one come from God. They had, as yet, hardly heard of the Prophet of

* Hist. Ecclesiast. Lib. II. cap. xii.

Nazareth : and it appears, from the account in the Acts, that Simon would willingly have joined the Nazarene community, but for the cause of alienation which arose. He appears to have been an earnest man,—an enthusiast in the use of his own powers of healing, and in the practice of his arts of magic: and he formed the low conception of Christianity which appears in his offer to Peter to purchase the communication of the powers which he saw exercised by the disciples. We must remember that there was reality at the bottom of the practice of Magical arts in the East; and that Simon, like other eastern sages and prophets, held his arts of healing and divination as scientific secrets. He was willing to pay for accessions to his knowledge; and his sincerity is proved, not only by this offer, but by his consternation when he found how his offer was reprobated as gross impiety. “Then answered Simon and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me.”* When the Christian disciples heaped shame and accusation upon him, he resumed his former position and office, and preached his own doctrine, in opposition to theirs: and by nothing has Christianity suffered more; for the learning and high gifts of Simon Magus gave him a hold upon minds of no mean order, in which the two doctrines became to a great extent united,—grievously to the degradation, of course, of Christianity.

Simon adopted the belief prevalent among the Egyptians, the speculative Jews, and the nations east of them, that the Divine Idea of the Universe,—sometimes called Wisdom,† sometimes the Word, sometimes the

* Acts, VIII. 24.

+ Proverbs, VIII. 22—31.

Creative Power,—is manifested to men in human form.—Among the triads and trinities of the heathen world, this Intelligence or Wisdom was the female member,—the Isis of Egypt, the Mother Ennoïa of Simon Magus. This second person of the triad was called the Virgin of God, and the Spouse of God ; and when the female titles were put away,—as when Osiris was the personage in question, the titles were “the first-born of God,”—“the only Son of God,” “the universal Man,” and many others.* The third function of the Triad was fulfilled by the Operative Power which was the necessary consequence of the Primitive Will and the first-conceived Idea, or Intelligence ; which Will and Idea must be carried out into action. Many sages had taught this doctrine, in various countries, for centuries ; but I do not know that any one before Simon Magus attempted to exhibit any Personifications,—beyond that of divine messages in their own persons. But Simon went to a length which proves what his own enthusiasm must have been, to induce toleration from his own mind, and from others. He presented to his followers the second Person of his triad in the form of a woman named Selena, whom he called the Divine Idea. He himself assumed to be God ; or, let us suppose, a manifestation of the spirit of God : and he was received as he desired. Justin Martyr, in his Second Apology, mentions a pillar which in his time existed at Rome, and which bore inscribed “Simoni Deo Sancto :” and Irenæus says, “This Simon therefore was received by many as God.” The Simonian doctrine was, briefly, that from

* Salvador, “Jésus Christ et sa Doctrine,” I. 199, 200.

this Virgin-mother Ennoia had sprung a secondary order of beings, by whom the world was created and all things done, under the limitation that the progeny was to remain ever attached to the parent,—the Active Agency to the Primal Thought. The progeny were disobedient, and held the mother captive, while they wrought all manner of abuses, and confounded ideas of good and evil. The Law of Moses and the prophets were declared (under the Samaritan prejudices of the philosopher) to share the confusion of the work of these fallen agents. Restoration could be hoped for only through the Teacher, who had come upon earth in a human form, to redeem mankind from their fall from their original purity, by bringing them a renovation of their nature. He presented himself to them as being “at once the image of the true Eternal Father, the true Son and Messiah of God, and the true Holy Spirit.”* Simon and Selena were worshipped as Jupiter and Minerva, also. How strange it is, no one can imagine who has not felt it, to find in Simon Magus the meeting point of so many ideas in a mind which once never dreamed of any connexion among them. When in my childhood, I read of the first case of Simony in Christian society,—the case from which the sin took its name,—and pitied the sincere but low-minded convert who met with such rebuke and punishment from Peter, how little did I dream that the idea of this man would

* Salvador, “*Jésus Christ et sa Doctrine*,” I. 200, 201. Irenæus, as cited by Salvador, says, “*Hic igitur Simo a multis quasi Deus glorificatus est, et docuit semetipsum esse qui inter Judæos quidem quasi Filius adparuerit, in Samariâ autem quasi Pater descenderit, et in reliquis vero gentibus quasi Spiritus Sanctus adventârit.*”—*Irenæus advers. Hæres.* Lib. I. cap. 20.

expand till I should see in him the chief of False Christs, the personifier of the allegories of the East, the Osiris of a known age, a Jupiter within our era, and the latest association of interest with the soil of Samaria, whose earliest interest arises from its being the territory of the children of Joseph! The blame of corrupting Christianity by the infusion of his doctrine into the traditions of the disciples, is not due to Simon himself. He opposed the disciples, and their converts and his disciples opposed each other: but we have no reason to believe that he so far embraced Christianity, after Peter's repulsion, as to have the power of immediately adulterating it. It was through his schools that the corruption reached Christianity, when men who held both doctrines began fatally to blend them, overlaying the simple teachings of Jesus with mysteries and allegories and fables, as injurious to the honour of God and the moral operation of the gospel as the devices of the Pharisees had been in the far less important case of the system of Moses. That Simon Magus lived on the hill towards which we were now setting our faces is a misfortune to many a child in England born within this year. That the company of the apostles should have had among them such a poet and theologian as John the Evangelist, and that he should have become the apostle of Asia, and have applied its theosophy to the interpretation of scriptural records and facts, may occasion perplexity and uneasiness to Bibliolators; but it cannot fail to work well in the end. As Salvador says * of John and his writings, "the purpose that he had of absorbing into the doctrine

* "Jesus Christ et sa Doctrine," I. 152, 153.

of his master the highest theosophic ideas of the oriental Jews among whom he spent the greater part of his life; caused him to have recourse to forms, and to a language altogether whose meaning we may suppose to have been never familiar to his eleven colleagues.—Far, however, from complaining of the differences, of the contradictions even, which we meet with in this quadruple monument (the Four Gospels) we must see that these differences constitute its true value: they magnify it by preserving the simple and involuntary impress of men and circumstances, and by connecting it together with all the writings of the rising school, with monuments of an older date, and with the general state of the region and of the times.”

Our last view of Jerusalem was very fine. We looked back from a ridge on the Nablous (the northern) road, and saw it lying, bright and stately, on its everlasting hills: but it looked lower than from most other points of view, from the Moab mountains forming its lofty background. We descended the slope before us, and lost sight of the Holy City for ever.

Again we were struck with the vivid colouring of the scenery. All this day, the hills were dressed in brilliant hues;—the soil, red, grey and brown; the tilled portions of the brightest green; and the shadows purple or lilac. All the hills show traces of having been once terraced; and they were still completely so in the neighbourhood of our encampment this evening,—the terraces following the strata of the stone, which all lay slanting. This gives a singular air of wildness to the most cultivated spots. Here and there were basins among the hills, full of corn, or with their red soil

dropped all over with fig and olive-trees : and the upland tracks wound among slopes all strewn with cistus, iris, cyclamen and anemones, and bristling with tall flowering hollyhocks. In the hollows were deep old wells, or stone cisterns, where the cattle were crowding to drink. A few camels were browsing, here and there, in the dells : and we met several groups of Arabs with their asses, carrying corn to the city. The stone villages on the heights were striking, as we found them everywhere in Palestine. Beer, ten miles from Jerusalem, was on a hill to the right. Travellers usually stop there, the first night after leaving the city : but we intended to proceed to Einbrook : and when we reached Einbrook, we were disposed to go further. We had not left Jerusalem till near noon ; and the afternoon and evening were charming. We were once more alone too,—our party of four, with servants ; and the saving of fatigue by the smallness of our number was great. We expected to meet the rest of the caravan at Nazareth, or at least at Damascus ; and meantime, it was more convenient, from the character of the country, to travel in smaller parties. An accident retarded the largest party, so that we had left Nazareth before they arrived ; and we saw no more of our Desert comrades, except of two of the gentlemen, who were at Damascus when we arrived.

Einbrook is beautiful on its hill, with its richly tilled slopes and valleys undulating all about it, and its olive trees casting their long evening shadows on the red soil. The road was very narrow and stony, between terraces of corn and groves of olive. Just past Einbrook, we descended into a hollow, and then rose again, and came out upon a green waste place, where the cattle

were drinking at an old-fashioned well. Then we entered a cultivated valley, where a promontory of the richest green, lustrous in the last rays of the sun, crossed our path. Winding round it, we entered the shadow, and watched the sunshine withdrawing from the heights. The valley narrowed to a ravine; and there were holes, like tombs, high up in the rocks on either hand. The wild-flowers made a garden of this glen; and I saw, for the first time, a honeysuckle in full blossom, climbing the rock to a great height.

Where this ravine narrowed to a pass, we observed the remains of a very substantial building, which looked like a fort. It was on our left hand; and just beyond it, sunk in a platform of rock, under a precipice garlanded with ferns, was one of the beautiful old pools of the country. It was now 6 P.M., and we were glad to find that we were to encamp beside the pool, on the platform under the precipice. I hastened back on foot to the honeysuckle, and brought home a charming handful of flowers.

While we were at dinner, a sound of scuffling was heard outside: and when Alee next entered, he was out of breath. We afterwards heard the whole story; and we were amused to find how zealous our Mohammedan servants could be in the cause of "Christian infidels." Some Arabs, with their loaded mules, had come with the intention of encamping beside the pool: and, on finding the ground partly occupied, though there was plenty of room left, they became abusive, and wondered aloud what business these damned Christians had in their country. Alee resented this, and threw the speaker down over the tent-ropes. There was then a

sharp scuffle ; and the cook coming to help, and the Arabs falling one upon another over the tent-pegs in the dark, they had the worst of it, and went off vowing vengeance. We heard no more of them, however.

Our destination the next day (Tuesday, April 15th) was the very ancient city of Shechem or Sychar, now Nablous. The cistus literally strewed the ground to-day ; and the hollyhocks, of pale and deep lilac, and of red, grew finely. There was yellow jessamine also.—From an elevation of the rocky hills, we caught a peep of the blue Mediterranean,—for the first time since leaving Alexandria.

We learned to-day what is meant when people speak of the roads in Palestine. The nearest resemblance to our English idea of a road is where a narrow lane, heaped with stones, runs between two walls. Elsewhere, there is a just practicable passage over shelves of rock, with a bit of irregular staircase at each end, to get up and down by. The pleasantest track is that which runs through olive groves, and along fields, and across a green plain : and with all their inequalities, I believe these paths are much less fatiguing than a broad, regular, dusty road would be. The wildness and apparent privacy have a charm which compensates for some difficulty.

We pursued to-day the long and fertile Hawarrah Valley, where the crops were rich for miles together, and villages were thickly planted on the eminences. Still, though we saw many settlements, we were persuaded that there must be more out of sight,—so vast did the produce appear in comparison with the population. We were always wondering what became of the

immense quantity of wheat and barley we saw growing,—to say nothing of the fruit. And this in a country which we had imagined, from the accounts of travellers, to be a spectacle to mankind, for desolation and barrenness! Travellers have told what they saw, no doubt; but they went, for the most part, at a different season. I imagine that we saw Palestine in its very best aspect; and many travellers have happened to be there in the intervals between the three crops of the year, when the stony, uncovered soil must indeed look parched and dreary. In this month of April, it was green, fresh, and flowery; and we asked one another repeatedly whether every mile of the land was not beautiful. I found it full of charms, from end to end.

As we proceeded to-day, the ground rose in a succession of table-lands, of which there was a series of three in leaving the Hawarrah Valley. We now began to observe the walnut and the mulberry in the orchards, and a general growing richness as we approached “the parcel of ground that Jacob bought,” opposite the opening of the valley of Sychar.

At the north-east corner of the Gerizim range, the road parts off,—one branch ascending the mountain, and the other winding round its base. I was riding on before; and seeing the baggage-mules beginning to ascend, and having a sign from the dragoman to proceed, I took the upper road: but my companions pursued the lower, which led them more directly to the great object of this day's travel,—Jacob's Well. I was fortunate in taking the upper road, for it afforded me a fine view of the whole scene at once: and it was not difficult to get down to my party afterwards. When I

had passed the shoulder of the mountain, the valley of Sychar lay below me, rich with groves and gardens, and with the sepulchres of Mount Ebal yawning in the face of the opposite precipices. At the upper end, to my left, lay the bright town, nestling in the valley, and extending completely across it,—even stretching a little way up the slopes of Gerizim. To my right, the valley opened out into the green plain,—Jacob's "parcel of ground," where a small village lay at the foot of Ebal, and a white Sheikh's tomb rose amidst the green. Another little plain joined on upon Jacob's possession; and it was bounded by a perfect semicircle of hills. Below me, to the right, lay some small clusters of ruins, where I saw my companions dismount, and where I soon joined them.

The clusters of ruins below consisted of a mill, with a channel for water, two deep shafts in the roof, and a chamber below:—and, near at hand, of the remains of a church, which was built very early in the Christian era, to honour the spot. Four granite pillars are visible. The well itself might easily be passed by unnoticed. Its mouth looks like a mere heap of stones: but several travellers who have descended into it,—Maundrell for one,—describe it so as to leave no doubt that all parties,—Jews, Samaritans, Christians, and Mohammedans,—who agree that this is the true old Jacob's well, are right. Maundrell found 15 feet of water at a depth of 105 feet (inclusive). Moreover, there is no other well in the neighbourhood, except one high up on Mount Gerizim. There are many fountains in the valley of Sychar, which one traveller or another has carelessly taken for wells: so that the descriptions

of Jacob's Well are very various. Certainly, the clear fountains and spreading reservoirs in the valley are more tempting to the imagination, and soothing to the eye of the tired traveller than this hole, where no water is to be seen : but there can be no question of this being the spot on which the narrative* represents Jesus as sitting to rest, and asking water of the Samaritan woman. As for the common objection, that this well is nearly a mile and a half from the city, and that the woman would not have come so far for water when she must have been able to obtain it at many nearer places, I see nothing in it, as the narrative does not mention that the woman came out of the city. She is not called a woman of Sychar, but a woman of Samaria ;—a country-woman, probably, living near the well. When she wished to call witnesses, to come and hear the words of the way-farer, she naturally went into the city : but there is no mention of her being an inhabitant of it.

Jesus had not intended to enter the town, it is clear. He was waiting here while his disciples went up the valley, to buy food in the town ; and then they would have followed the road through the plain to Samaria. There was no inducement to any Jew to enter any Samaritan city, if he could avoid it. But when the townsmen came out to him, and showed an open-minded interest in hearing of the Messiah, and of its having become lawful, in the mind of a Jew, to worship elsewhere than in the Temple, Jesus entered the city, and abode there two days.†—No scene of these ancient incidents is more clear and interesting than this. It is

* John, IV.

† John, IV. 40.

impossible not to see his very gestures when he spoke of “this mountain,”—the Gerizim which rose above him,—and when he bade his hearers lift up their eyes, and look on the fields,—already “white unto the harvest;”—the tilled lands of Jacob’s plain which stretched before him. The simplicity of the controversy, in the woman’s statement of it, and appeal to the authority of forefathers; and the Teacher’s assertion of the superiority of Jewish worship,—“ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship;”—the naturalness of this is so exquisite as to give on the spot the impression of modernness; and to make one feel more like an actual spectator of the incident than I had ever yet felt, in any of the sacred localities.—No part of the narrative is, to my mind, more striking than the offer of hospitality,—the invitation to Jesus to stay in the city. The sorest point of the controversy being this temple on Gerizim,—the Jews abhorring it, and the Samaritans feeling the hardship of their forefathers having been excluded from the Jerusalem Temple,—how the news must have run through Sychar that a teacher had come from Jerusalem itself, who said that men might worship any and everywhere! Here was an opening for peace making, and for something higher still; for exalting and spiritualising the religious conceptions of earnest and anxious inquirers. Here were “friendly dealings” indeed between Jews and Samaritans; and in the higher party, that loving care which made him ever vigilant over the perplexed and wandering, to bring them home, that there might be “one fold and one Shepherd.”

Our ride up the valley, as far as the town, was

delightful. The fountains, and fields and orchards make a perfect garden of the place ; and the people were standing or sitting under the shade of the trees. The sepulchres in the rock reminded us of old days ; and so did the mountains, to the right hand and the left. The difference in the aspect of Ebal and Gerizim is less marked than we had been led by books to suppose ; and it was some time before I felt sure that Gerizim was, on the whole, more fertile than Ebal.— Joshua could not have chosen a nobler spot for the solemn ceremony of instructing the people in the threatening and promises of the Law.* He placed six of the tribes at the foot of the one mountain, and six at the foot of the other ; and caused to be proclaimed to the people those noble and awful blessings and curses which were long afterwards recorded at length in the Book of Deuteronomy.†

It was all very pleasant riding up the valley ; but now we had to enter the town, and even to pass along its whole length. I have mentioned that in Egypt I found this process very disagreeable. Here, it was worse than in any place, before or after. To make part of an equestrian troop, (looking only too like Batty's troop at home ;—) to pace as slowly as possible, one by one, through the ill-paved, narrow bazaars, where one's horse starts or shies at a blacksmith's fire or a fluttering curtain ;—and to feel conscious all the while of a dress which is thought odious, and which was always dusty at the close of a day's travel ;—all this was disagreeable enough : but at Nablous, there are other

* Joshua, VIII. 83.

† Deuteronomy, XXVII, XXVIII.

désagrémens. The bigotry of the people is so great that till of late years, no Christian was permitted to set foot within the gates. Ibraheem Pasha punished the place severely, and made the people so desperately afraid of him that they observe his commands pretty much as if he had power in Syria still. One of his commands was that Christians should not be ill-treated ; so we entered Nablous, and rode through it to our encampment on the other side. During our passage, I had three slaps in the face from millet stalks and other things thrown at me ; and whichever way we looked, the people were grinning, thrusting out their tongues, and pretending to spit. My party blamed me for feeling this, and said things which were undeniably true about the ignorance of the people, and the contempt we should feel for such evidences of it. But, true as all this was, I did not grow reconciled to being hated and insulted ; and I continue to this day to think the liability to it the great drawback of Eastern travel.

The town is large,—the bazaars handsome,—and the women becomingly dressed in cream-coloured mantles or veils, bordered with red. Just outside the further gate, there were lepers again,—a forlorn company ranged under the trees, holding out their poor maimed hands for charity.—Our tents were pitched on a grassy, weedy plot, sprinkled over with fruit trees, and with springs and gardens all about ; and, of course, with the pair of mountains still rising on either hand. Ebal exhibited a large prickly-pear garden ; and Gerizim a fine face of orange rocks, fissured with dark clefts, and fringed with brushwood.

After dinner, we were eager to be walking. We

wanted to obtain a view of the town from above it; and I had some little hope that before we returned we might have learned something of the few remaining Samaritans: and perhaps have seen them and their precious MS. Every one knows that this MS., though not 3,500 years old, as the Samaritans pretend, is yet a very valuable copy of the Pentateuch. It is interesting, from its value in the eyes of scholars, and from its being a fine specimen of Samaritan text :* and no less from the firm faith with which the Samaritans regard it as an antique of 3,500 years old.

We ascended the slope on our left,—that of Gerizim,—passed the Mohammedan cemetery, and attained a point whence we had a noble view, in the last sunlight, of this beautiful city. It could hardly have looked more beautiful when it was the capital of Samaria. Its houses, with their flat white roofs, are hedged in by the groves which surround the town: vines spread from roof to roof, and from court to court: four palm trees spring up in the midst; and higher aloft still, a graceful minaret here and there.

Here we were told, to my delight, that we might see the Samaritans and their synagogue. We were led down into the town, and along some low arched passages, and across a small court, to the synagogue. There the Samaritans dropped in, to greet us; and we saw almost all of the sect in the place. It was not very easy to communicate freely with them. Our dragoman did his best to interpret: but he, a Mohammedan, was not very clear about the distinctions between Jews, Samaritans and Christians: and we are not very sure

* See p. 95.

of the information obtained through him. We thought these Samaritans good-looking people, and all the better looking for the high, helmet-like, antique turban that they wore. They said their number was sixty at Nablous, and forty elsewhere :—only a hundred in the whole world. This they declared over and over again. They said—what we could hardly credit—that their chief priest was not here, but at Genoa,—with the remnant of their sect. They keep their great feasts,—three in the year,—as punctually as the Jews ; going up Gerizim as the Jews used to go up to the Temple ; and reading the Law from sunrise till noon.

The Synagogue is a small, ordinary-looking chapel, within a curtained recess of which is kept the old copy of the Pentateuch. It was shown to us, after some entreaty on our part. I petitioned to be allowed to touch it, “out of respect;” but the priest said that even he must wash and put on new clothes before he could touch it: and I observed indeed how carefully he held it by the ends of the rollers, within which it is furled, like the copies of the Law in Jewish synagogues. He never for a moment ceased his care not to touch the vellum.—The text is clear, small and even ;—the lines continuous, and not broken into words. The ancient vellum is much tattered, of course; but it is carefully mounted on stout parchment. It was a striking scene,—this remnant of the ancient sect, collected in their little synagogue, and seen by the light of two dim candles. They gave me every opportunity of observing their countenances, and in a good light; for they were so struck with my trumpet that they crowded round me, with the candles,

wherever I moved : and, if they were too much engrossed with this novelty to attend sufficiently to our questions, they at least gave me every facility for noting their picturesque and earnest faces. There was something shocking, too, in their eagerness about an ear-trumpet, when we were full of their ancient history as Samaritans.

It was now dark : and we were lighted through the archways, and down the hill on our way home, by a single candle, which burned steadily in the still air.—I bathed in the spring which bubbled up out of the ground, among the gardens near our encampment : and after tea, we read aloud the 4th chapter of John, and the history of the Jewish and Samaritan controversy, that our memories might not be treacherous on the spot. While we were thus reading in our tent, the jackal was in full cry on the slopes of Gerizim.

We went up the hill again, the next morning, to see the city lying in its valley, and admire the picturesque Nablous people sitting and walking in their cemetery ; and it was past seven before we mounted.—Nothing can be more cheerful than the valley beyond Nablous. The fountains are innumerable. Every few minutes we were passing brimming cisterns, bubbling springs, and shining brooks ; and streamlets came down from the hills to the right hand and the left. Of course, the valley is fertile, and to-day, the reapers were busy among the barley all along the valley ; and the waving crops on the uplands were nearly ready for the sickle. The hills, a continuation of Ebal and Gerizim, are more thickly peopled than in any district we had yet passed through,—the villages being in sight of one

another, from height to height, all the way.—We had passed a picturesque old aqueduct, which communicated with a modern mill; and we knew that the next was to be our signal to turn up the hills to the right, to find Sebaste, the ancient Samaria. The baggage-train was to proceed along the direct road to Djeneen, our resting-place for the night. Our party, when we began crossing the hills, was thus a small one, and two were ladies; and the inhabitants of Sebaste have the reputation of being rude and rapacious towards all strangers but those who are imposing from their arms and their numbers. But we met with no direct incivility. From the eminence we ascended on coming to the second aqueduct, the finest possible view is obtained of the site of the ancient Samaria: and a finer site no city, ancient or modern, ever had. The surrounding hills make a basin of about six miles in diameter. They are of considerable height, so that they might almost be called mountains; but there are openings between them which cause a sufficient circulation of air to ventilate the interior of this rampart. Nearly in the midst of this basin rises an oblong, swelling hill,—not so lofty as those which surround it, but high enough to be breezy and sunny. Old Samaria covered this hill, and stretched down round its skirts. The great Baal temple, and the palaces of his priests, and of Ahab and Jezebel, and the groves of Ashtaroth, then crowned this hill, and adorned its slopes; and the well-watered valleys on every side were rich with gardens, and orchards and fertile fields, while the opposite uplands were clothed with flocks. Over the ridge of one of these hills, came the fierce Jehu from Jezreel, where he had seen Jezebel

destroyed. He came to ascertain that all the descendants of Ahab had been put out of the way, according to his command; and when he had furthermore slain all the princes of Judah, here it was that he ordered that great feast of Baal, when these valleys echoed with music, and the sacrifices were led with rejoicing up the central hill to the great temple. There, from within that temple, were heard the shrieks of the slaughtered priests and worshippers; and thither, when none were left alive of all who had followed Baal, came Jehu himself, with his officers and attendants, to break the images of the god, and unroof the temple, and claim glory from the prophets of Jehovah for having thus vindicated his name.—Such was the place at one time: and now, how changed and still it lies! Where the dwellings of the city rose in tiers, up the hill sides, there are now terraces of waving barley, and lines of olive-trees. Where the priests trod the marble pavements of the Temple of the Sun, the night-hawk broods over her eggs among the stones. The yellow nettle grows, almost like a shrub, where garlands for the sacrifice were gathered, and the white convolvulus and dog-rose run riot over the foundation-stones of the ancient palaces.

But other powers have been here since the days of Ahab and Jehu, and the vengeful prophets of Israel. Herod rebuilt and fortified Samaria, and called it Sebaste, in honour of Augustus (Sebastus) Cæsar. Josephus tells of the citadel of Sebaste, and of the noble palaces and colonnades of Herod's building: and there are remains enough to tell the story for themselves. Shafts of granite pillars stand in the field, and

in long rows on the hill-side. Mutilated capitals are laid down among the village pavement: and broken shafts are built into the walls of the vineyards. Judging by these remains, the architecture must have been of a mean order; and I certainly felt disposed on the spot to overlook Herod and his Roman friends, and to go back in memory to the short-lived and turbulent kingdom of Israel, when the planetary faith of the East and the Monotheism of the Hebrews here carried on their most desperate conflict, and when it was high-day with the power of the prophets. It may be doubted whether any heathenism with which the world was ever afflicted was administered with so fierce a vindictiveness and cruelty as the Prophets of Jehovah cherished and boasted of in this place. Here, however,—into this valley from whence Elisha sent his fatal message to Jehu,—came One afterwards who sent a very different message abroad among men; that they should become children of a Father who makes his sun rise on the evil and the good, and sends his rain upon the just and the unjust. I could not but look upon the dewy wild flowers as having sprung up in his footsteps, where otherwise all would have been barren and dreary,—laid utterly waste by the destructive passions of men. There is a comparatively modern monument here, which looks strangely on such a spot;—a half-ruined Gothic cathedral upon the hill of Samaria! It is believed to be the work of the Empress Helena, who, crediting whatever she was told, supposed she had found the dungeon in which the Baptist was beheaded. Part of the walls of this cathedral look like any handsome modern church: and its position is very fine,

when looked back upon from the valley, or from the opposite hill-side.

We appeared a most flowery party as we rode away from Sebaste. Below the village, in a nook of moist ground, the large blue iris grew in profusion ; and our guide Giuseppe, our buffoon for the time, presented us with handfuls of them. He was riding a very small ass, so largely (though not heavily) laden, that his legs stuck out horizontally over his baggage as he rode. He had stuck bunches of iris wherever he could insert them about his ass, carried a large bunch in each hand, and had feathered his hat all round with the nodding flowers ; so that he was as fantastic an *avant-courier* as could be seen.—The slopes were now all yellow with marigolds, and the ground covered with scabius, white convolvulus, yellow nettles, hollyhocks and wild artichokes. We had entered the plain of Sharon, in the midst of which stands Sannoor on its flowery hill. Here we were carried on to crusading times ; for here the crusaders built a stout fort, by which they commanded the neighbouring region.

A little further on, and about three hours from Djeneen, we overtook our baggage-train : and for those three hours, we had a constant succession of beautiful views. When we left the plain of Sharon, we entered a little grassy valley, where a round, weedy old well occurred here and there ; and camels were feeding, and we met Arabs with their donkeys, and women carrying loads of wood. Twice we caught glimpses, through breaks in the hills, of the Plain of Esdraëlon or Jezreel, which we were to cross to-morrow : and beautiful it looked, beyond the dark foreground of olive groves,—

its rich levels stretching far away in the afternoon sunshine to the blue Galilean hills which bounded it to the north.—By a steep and picturesque descent, we came down upon Djeneen, which lies on the boundary between the hill country and the plain of Jezreel.

The town itself is on the lowest slope of the hills ; and a part of it is impregnably fortified by a hedge of prickly pear. I was not aware till this day how impossible it is to do anything with such a fence. I tried, as an experiment, to pass through a gap ; and when I had succeeded in getting two steps back again, out of the clutches of the malicious plant, I was persuaded that no artificial *chevaux de frise* can surpass it.—We encamped on a piece of waste ground between the town and the cemetery, and were desired not to stray, nor to leave about any article of property whatever. It is a poor town, with only about eight hundred inhabitants, who have as bad a reputation as if they lived on the Jericho road. While the tents were putting up, I happened to be sitting beside a pile of saddles and pistols ; and Alec asked me not to leave the spot without calling him to mount guard, as the Djeneen people pounce upon everything that is left unwatched for a moment. I could not keep awake, after having been eight hours in the saddle, and made a pillow of the property beside me.

When I awoke, I found that some visitors had been taking pipes and coffee in the gentlemen's tent : the Governor of Djeneen, and a majestic-looking homicide ; —a man of the name of Abderrahman, who arrived at home, one day of the preceding year, with a man's head hanging from his saddle. It was not too late now

for me to see these gentry ; but I was not disposed.' The Governor made a great show of interest about our being well guarded ; and promised to send four guards who might be entirely relied on. The horses and mules were collected and pegged down early, and all made as secure as the bad character of the neighbourhood seemed to require. I walked out in the evening in the dark, when the muezzin was calling to prayer from the minaret of the town, and when all was still except when a prowling dog, or a curious townsman, stole through the grass or the tombs near, to walk round our camp. I kept within call of our people; but yet I saw a good deal of the ways of the people about, dim as the sky was, and late the hour. I never made the effort to conquer my fatigue and go out, without being glad that I had done so. I always learned something, or saw something that I was glad to remember. If nothing else, there was always the camp ; and a few new faces, to add to my interior portrait gallery.

In the morning, our best mule was gone. The four guards appeared quite as much surprised as any body else, and could not account for its being released from its pegs before their eyes, and detached from the line, and carried off, without any one of the four perceiving the theft. Alee frankly told us his opinion. He believed that the Governor knew very well where the mule was ; that he would come, and condole, and offer his services, and recommend that one of our muleteers should be left behind :—that in a day or two, the beast would be declared found upon the mountain, having simply strayed ; and that a sum of money would be asked for the trouble for finding

it,—while it was, no doubt, all the while safe enough in a stable in the town. Such was Alee's view of the case, as an experienced man.

Presently the Governor came, and looked very solemn over his coffee: and his advice was that a muleteer should be left behind,—to meet us at Nazareth, after our excursion to Mount Carmel.—This business delayed our departure, so that I had time to see something of this respectable Djeneen. The respectable homicide appropriately offered his services as escort to two of us who were disposed to walk; and nothing could be more courteous than his behaviour. We were told that he had a very good case: that there was an old blood feud between his family and that of his victim, and that he had received excessive provocation. He was a fine-looking personage,—not only tall and dignified, but with an open and gentle expression of countenance.—Under his guidance, we saw the outside of the Governor's house, the café to which the smokers and news-mongers repair;—(this day, to talk over our mule, no doubt;—) a poor, half-empty bazaar, and a mosque which had four marble Corinthian pillars before it. We returned through an orange grove, which was in full blossom. Hitherto, I had seen nothing like it. Abderrahman gave us noble bunches of the blossoms, which we kept fresh for some days.

A large ruined building, like a fort, crowned an eminence near our camp: and from this I saw something which I should not have dreamed of looking for. I saw snow on a mountain peak to the north-east. This mountain was Djebel Sheikh, the last peak of the

Antilibanus range, and that which closes in the valley of the Jordan to the north.

We got to horse before ten o'clock,—not yet out of Samaria, but rejoicing that our next rest was to be among the hills of Galilee.

CHAPTER VII.

PLAIN OF ESDRAËLON.—NAZARETH.—RIDE TO MOUNT CARMEL.—CONVENT OF MOUNT CARMEL.—ACRE.—RETURN TO NAZARETH.

THE Plain of Esdraëlon is as lovely in itself as it is interesting from its associations. It extends in great vastness before the eye; but there is no part, if I remember rightly, which is not visibly inclosed by hills. Immediately behind us, to the south, rose the hills of Samaria which we had just crossed. To the south-east, the plain extended back for a considerable distance behind Djeneen, there supporting the Gilboa range, where Saul and Jonathan laid down their lives together. That cluster of hills was the spot where the mighty had fallen, when David lamented in one strain the father and the son, his inveterate persecutor and his most beloved friend. In the plain, near the northern end of this Gilboa range, was Jezreel, where Ahab built for his sun-worshipping queen her famous palace,—from a window of which she asked Jehu the fatal question,—“Had Zimri peace who slew his master?”—and from which window she was thrown down, at the command of the savage conqueror.—Further along the eastern side of the plain, rises Little Mount Hermon, which we

had on our right for some hours this morning: and on one of its northern spurs lie the remains of the village of Nain. Here again, we might turn away from the bloody deeds and vindictive spirits of the earlier periods, to repose on the spiritual calm, and enjoy the benevolent acts, of him who "came not to destroy men's lives but to save them." How near together are the two scenes which so strongly exhibit the differing spirit of the two dispensations! Jehu, coming at the call of Elisha, was met by the son of the widowed Jezebel as he was approaching her palace; and he shot the prince through the heart; and then, advancing, instead of attempting to console the widowed and mourning mother, he commanded her murder, by a cruel and contemptuous death. This was the pupil of the Prophet Elisha. Very near to this spot, a widowed mother appears in the history of a later time, following the bier of her only son: and one arrived who restored her son to her, after having spoken words of cheer. Here was the spirit of the new dispensation!—A little further on is Endor, where the restless and apprehensive Saul came to learn his fate and that of his house, by means of those arts of Divination which he had declared punishable by death.—A little further on still, is Mount Tabor, traditionally the Mount of Transfiguration.—Far beyond these ranges, and towering over every thing intermediate, rises that peak of Djebel Sheikh which I have mentioned, from whose base flow the first streams of the Jordan. Along the north end of the plain run the Galilean hills, in which Nazareth lies embosomed: and where they retreat to the northwest, the expansion of the plain in that direction nearly

reaches Carmel: and through it runs the Kishon, whose overflow swept away the forces of Sisera, and whose stream was defiled with the blood of four hundred and fifty of the prophets of Baal, slain at the command of Elijah.

Then, approaching us from that north-west point, comes the range of Carmel, its ilex woods becoming distinguishable on its nearer slopes. These western hills, without intermitting, decline into the lower ranges as they reach the south-west of the plain, and there become mingled with the hills of Samaria.—Nowhere in the Holy Land did we see any district so various in its historical interests as this: and indeed, there is no other so marked. To the eye of the historical and religious philosopher, the dead rise here, to give account of the life of the Hebrew nation, from their first entrance upon the land to their expulsion from it.

First comes the ghostly array of the tribes following Joshua. Some of them had had their portions assigned on the eastern side of Jordan, but had obeyed Joshua's command to defer their settlement there till the enemy should be everywhere subdued, and the tribes be secure of their respective portions.* Here they came on from the Jordan; and were halted while this fertile and beautiful plain was apportioned to the tribe of Issachar;—Issachar who, according to the blessing in Deuteronomy, was to “rejoice in his tents,”† and here had abundant reason to do so.

Then, when Joshua and all that host whom he led had passed on through the Valley of the shadow of death, new generations were busy on their traces.

* Joshua, I. 12—15.

+ Deuteronomy, XXIII. 18.

A Kenite woman, belonging to a neutral tribe, at peace with both the Canaanites and the Hebrews, was at her tent door here one day, listening, as she watched her flock, for the far sounds of battle: for the great Canaanitish general had collected his iron chariots and ranged his troops; and Barak, the Hebrew leader, rushed down the side of Mount Tabor, to meet Sisera in the plain.* The shock of war was fierce, and the swollen river carried off many of the Canaanites whom the battle had spared. As the Kenite woman, Jael, was aware that the strife was over, while the evening stillness was settling down upon the plain, a fugitive, weary, heated and thirsty, came by. She invited him in, probably in the sincere spirit of the ordinary Eastern hospitality, which makes the tent of the host the sanctuary of the guest:—she gave him milk, and laid him down to rest. And then, while he slept heavily, occurred the tempting thought, the devilish suggestion, of the favour she might secure from the conquering party, if she delivered the commander of the foe dead into their hands: and here she murdered him. That black deed comes up to judgment in this fair scene, like a poisonous exhalation from the verdant ground.

Next comes a figure, “taller than any others of the people by the shoulders and upwards,”—a man muffled and disguised, with two followers at his heels, stealing over the plain in the night, to the dwelling of the seeress of Endor.† And through the darkness appeared the sheeted ghost,—the “old man with a mantle” whom Saul dared not look upon, even while pouring out his complaints, and questioning Samuel of

* Judges, IV. 14—22.

+ 1 Samuel; XXVIII. 8.—25.

his doom. His restless spirit,—“ sore distressed,” as he declared,—was soothed by no deception or equivocal words :—“ to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me,” was the warning of the spirit.—And next day,—no further off than these heights of Gilboa,—Saul “ was sore wounded of the archers,” and, when his armour-bearer would not dispatch him before the foe came up, he fell upon his own sword. Here, among these green slopes, “ Saul died, and his three sons, and his armour-bearer, and all his men, that same day together.” And his armour was hung up in the temple of Astarte, in the nearest town upon the plain. “ How were the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished ! ”*

Long after, a stern prophet might be often seen going to and fro in various directions over this plain. “ What manner of man was he ? ” asked king Ahaziah. “ And they answered him, He was a hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins.—And he said, It is Elijah the Tishbite.”† Yes,—Elijah often passed over this Esdraëlon ;—sometimes to Damascus ; sometimes to Mount Carmel, and along the course of the Kishon : and once he came upon the news that the king and queen, Ahab and Jezebel, had enlarged the grounds of their new palace at Jezreel, here at hand, by taking possession of a vineyard which they had coveted, and procured at length by false accusation and murder. We cannot tell which of the fields now spreading about the village once called Jezreel was Naboth’s vineyard : but in surveying the scene, the eye cannot miss it, though it cannot identify it.

* 2 Samuel, I. 27.

† 2 Kings, I. 8.

Here, soon after, came another general, driving in his chariot over the plain. He was a great man, fortunate in every thing but health: but what was all his prosperity to him while he was a leper? How earnest was his desire for relief is shown by his taking the word of "a little maid" of his wife's, a Hebrew girl, and coming all the way from Damascus to Samaria, in hope of cure. And when he had found his cure in Jordan, and had returned to Samaria to give thanks to Elisha, he was passing home to Damascus again, over this plain, when Gehazi overtook him, and obtained a gift by fraud. It might have been somewhere within sight that the Syrian general "lighted down out of his chariot" to meet the prophet's servant.

If Gehazi did here a mean and fraudulent act, his master soon committed a deed of recklessness and vindictive cruelty for which no reprobation can be too strong. He sent by this way a young prophet, in search of Jehu, with a message, as from Jehovah, the object of which was to avenge the wrongs of the prophets on the posterity of Ahab, the patron of the priests of Baal. Hither came the young prophet, with his loins girded, and the box of oil in his hand,* with which he was to anoint Jehu for his savage office. And hither soon came Jehu, breathing vengeance and slaughter, and murdered the young king who came out to meet him; and then the royal mother, at her own palace; and then above a hundred of the royal race; and finally, the whole multitude of the priests and worshippers of Baal. They are like an army of ghostly victims, haunting the plain.

* 2 Kings, IX. 1.

Here, in a later time, did the Egyptians destroy one whose life was of inestimable importance, and whose death remains a mystery. The Egyptian monarch Necho had no enmity against Josiah ; and he told him so. Necho was coming up against Damascus, and had no desire to make enemies along his road : but Josiah, for some unknown reason, attacked him on his way ;—possibly from fear of the Egyptian power, if it should be established to the north-east, as well as the south-west of his dominions. Here he came out against the Egyptians, upon this plain,—after witnessing the completion of the great work of elaborating and propounding the Law, and re-establishing the Passover : and here “the archers shot at king Josiah ; and the king said to his servants, Have me away ; for I am sore wounded.” * And they took him to Jerusalem, where he died.

And at last, after the march of more armies on errands of destruction, how sweet is the calm which settles down upon this wide field of history when the Messengers of Peace come hither, charged with words of wisdom and offices of mercy ! When Jesus was on his way homewards from Jerusalem, “he must needs pass through Samaria,” and, of course, over this plain. And we know that when he journeyed southwards from the lake, accompanied by those who had left their nets to follow him, he took his way by Nain. How one sees them, in the fresh morning, coming onwards over the green tracks, and delayed till the heat of noon by those who issued forth from the villages to accost and petition the Teacher ! What a multitude on the slopes of Tabor ! and further on, we think of the disciples

* 2 Chron. XXXV. 23.

of John coming to know who, in truth, he was, and whether they were yet to look for another.—One man afterwards travelled this road to Damascus, full of hatred and murderous thoughts against these children of the kingdom of peace; but he was soon disabused; and Paul returned an altered man,—ready to pour out his own blood, but no more to shed that of others. When the traveller contemplates this succession of events on their march through this scene, from the restless spirits of the dark early times to the blessed ministers of a later age, he sees “the day-spring from on high” touching those Galilean hills, and brightening the plain, and trusts that dark as are the clouds that yet overshadow that light, it shall “increase more and more unto the perfect day.”

We were glad to find the scene so still and quiet now. The villages were few, and all retired from our track. That track was green, and perfectly level. The wild flowers were profuse along the way: wild artichokes made a sort of fence on either hand; and beyond them was long grass, where the tall cranes were wading; or tilled fields, over which the quail was flitting, and from which young partridges ran out under my horse’s feet. Butterflies and dragon-flies glittered in the sun, and small birds fluttered about us as if they had no fear of us. We saw the outline of the village of Nain, standing up against the clear sky, on the promontory of Little Hermon, to our right hand. Mount Tabor rose conspicuous from the plain; and we then believed that we should look abroad from its summit, before many days were over; a hope which was not fulfilled. A little beyond the middle of the plain, a broad road

crossed our track : and here, while waiting for directions from behind which way to take, I saw a travelling party,—camels, with merchants and merchandise,—going north-eastwards along the broad road ;—to Damascus, as I afterwards learned. This is the regular camel-road from the coast to Damascus.

We were now in Galilee ; and it was not long before we began to ascend the hills which had looked so tempting from Djeneecn. They were very pretty now, when we were climbing up, and winding round their stony passes. Their recesses were wooded, and goats were browsing on their sides. One pass was very steep: then we came upon a well: then we turned round the base of two or three eminences, rising from this high table-land ; and then suddenly found ourselves looking down upon pretty Nazareth. Its modern name is Nâsirah.

No place in Palestine satisfied me more entirely than Nazareth. Much as one's associations require, it is all there ; and one's first and constant emotion here is of thankfulness that Jesus was reared amidst such natural beauty. Fifteen hills congregate to form the basin in which Nazareth lies ;—a basin of fertility, high up among the hills,—not deep enough for extreme heat,—at a breezy elevation,—and abundantly watered by springs in the rock, and streams from the surrounding heights. The town lies at one end of this oblong depression ; and some of its buildings stretch a little way up a slope. Before the town, lies a little green plain, where we longed to pitch our tents: but the servants apprehended rain, and we were conducted to the Latin Convent. The guest-chambers there had

been taken possession of by the officers of the Harlequin,—the gentlemen we had met at the Consul's at Jerusalem : but they insisted on giving them up to us. Our quarters were so comfortable that we had no drawback but the shame of turning out our predecessors, who had had worse than no rest the night before, after the strong exercise of riding over the hills in the way peculiar to British sailors. I could scarcely keep my saddle, the next day, for laughing at the sight of the middies, spurring and tugging,—stooping to the very mane, and letting their flaps fly like a pair of wings. The steeper the hill-side, the faster they must go ; and the wilder and more desperate they were, the more wretched looked their confounded dragoman. They gave him no rest of body or mind. When I heard lately that one of the party had boasted in his letters home that he had killed off three horses in that trip, I wondered whether they had allowed themselves an equal proportion of dragomen. Their method of riding, however, whatever we may otherwise think of it, certainly enhanced their merit in giving up their apartments to us, when they must have so much needed rest.

The Latin Convent is the largest building in Nazareth ; but it is not disagreeably conspicuous,—the other abodes being, however poorly inhabited, substantially built. We went immediately to the Church of the Convent,—the Church of the Annunciation.

I cannot say what is the reason ; but it certainly appears that a visit to this church is something very different from attendance on other convent worship in Palestine. One traveller after another,—the man of

the world, the Protestant divine, the glib narrator, and the scientific historian,—have testified without concert to the emotions excited by the worship of this church. No doubt, the locality is supremely interesting; but that would rather indispose me, for one, for a favourable impression from any of the artificial features of the place. The church is small and plain, compared with many others, though with handsome hangings, and certainly quite enough of show. The earnestness of the monks, and the beauty of the music have much to do with the impression, no doubt. The chaunting is very fine. It was certainly the best music we heard while abroad. The spectacle was strange when the choristers came down, and kneeled on the pavement beside me, and uncovered their heads at the elevation of the Host;—the marked Arab face, and the head shaven, except the top-knot left for the angel of the resurrection!

The floor rises towards the grand altar, to accommodate the grottoes below. These grottoes formed, the monks say, the lower part of the house of Joseph and Mary. The upper part, they declare, took flight to avoid desecration from the Mohammedans, and soared through the air to Loretto, resting for a time in Illyria by the way. We were obliged to visit the part which remains; which we did by descending the steps within the church. The nest of little caverns in the subterranean rock are devoutly shown as Mary's kitchen, sitting-room and chamber. Thus far, one may smile at the childish superstition which makes warm-hearted, ignorant persons gratify their imagination and affections by consecrating localities such as these. But

something follows which one cannot regard so cheerfully. We were led to the spot of the Annunciation, and shown the granite pillars which stand where the angel Gabriel and Mary stood when she received the promise. To persons well read in history, who are aware of the frequent recurrence of this mythic story, in connexion with the birth of conspicuous men, there is nothing surprising in meeting with it here: and those whose reading has not gone beyond their bible cannot but be struck by the identity of the history of the birth of Ishmael, Isaac, Samuel, and especially Samson, with that of Jesus, as far as the annunciation of each to the mother by an angel is concerned. But I had seen more. In ancient Egyptian temples, we had encountered the same story that awaited us here. In Egypt, it was harmless and interesting to see sculptured before our eyes, and explained by written legends, the appearance of Thoth, the heavenly messenger, to Tmanhemva, Queen of Thothmes IV., to announce to her from the Supreme,—from Amun Generator himself,—that she should bear a son.* In Egypt, it was harmless and interesting to trace the incarnations which, understood as we understand them now, give us at once the truths made known in the Mysteries, and the form of allegory in which the priests presented the concealed doctrine to the people. We do not revolt from the white star on the forehead of Apis, (the spot which marked the entrance of the divine ray,) nor from any other tokens of those incarnations which abound in the old Eastern mythologies. They convey

* Champollion, *Lettres sur l' Egypte*. Palace of Amenuphis Memnon at El Uksur.

truths in their way ; and the way was appropriate to the people and the time. But when, in a much later age, the monotheistic Jews put aside the characteristics of their faith, received the infection of allegorising from their heathen neighbours, and attached their allegories to the simple history of their prophets, the process assumes a new character, and is likely to be used to a most disastrous purpose. Philo allegorised about Jewish personages and events, and Jewish scholars understood him. Origen allegorised so as to do us no harm at this day ; as his method was avowed, and is sufficiently understood by Christian scholars. But it has been a great misfortune to the average Christian world for many ages, that the old allegories of Egypt,—the old images of miraculous birth, and the annunciation of it from heaven, should have been laid hold of, and repeated from age to age, however the character of the theology might change, till at last, repeated without explanation, it came to be taken, with other mythic stories, for historical truth, and is to this day profanely and literally held by multitudes who should have been trained to a truer reverence ; and jested upon by multitudes more who cannot be wondered at for looking no further into Christianity, when they find this old Egyptian and Hindoo allegory presented as a historical fact at the very outset. Having stood before the sculpture of the Annunciation at Thebes, and standing now between the pillars of the Annunciation at Nazareth, I could not but feel how much less irreverence attached to the Egyptian doctrines, in their early age : and I think no one can doubt what indignation would be expressed against the blasphemous indecency

of Egyptian superstition, if we knew that they had presented to the people, as literal truth, such a story about the birth of the most distinguished of Egyptian men as our poor and ignorant fellowmen are told in our Christian churches, through the mistake of an ancient allegory for modern history. To the earnest and thoughtful observer it appears no wonder that Christianity has done so little to raise and purify the nations in eighteen centuries, while even now so much of mythological fable is permitted to encrust it, and while so many tenets which would be called immoralities in any other connection,—tenets which have found their way into Christianity as corruptions, through the self-will and vain imaginations of former men,—are now preserved as essential doctrines by the ignorance and timid superstition of later generations. Till the religion taught by Jesus is purged of its Egyptian, Greek, Assyrian and Pharisaic accretions and adulterations, there can be little hope that its effects will answer to its promises; and the mystery of its failure in regenerating the world will remain what it now is.

In the church is hung, near the altar, what the monks call the portrait of Christ,—copied from an original likeness! They actually believe in this portrait-painting among the Jews at the time of Jesus! However uncomfortable it makes one, one cannot help looking at this picture, when it is before one's eyes: and it is best to look; for there can be no association of one's idea of him with it after that. It is meant to represent the ordinary conception of his face; and it is not so bad as to be indecent: but the face is wooden, and the eyes are not quite straight. The belief of these

ignorant monks is evidently sincere; as it would be if a printing-press or a mail-coach were given to them, as being relics of the same date.

They took us to Joseph's workshop, where, as they say, Jesus assisted his father. It is now a small chapel, with a paltry altar. Next, we were shown the house where, as the monks said, "Jesus gave a supper to his friends, before and after his resurrection." A rock starts up out of the floor of this apartment, slanting, but so nearly round as to resemble a table; and hence, no doubt, the origin of the tradition. This "Mensa Christi" appears to be valued above every other memorial at Nazareth. The papal sanction* gave it this value in the eyes of the Latin Christians: the Greeks esteem it no less: and the Arabs and Turks come and prostrate themselves,—apparently because other people do,—with as much zeal as if they also were to gain seven years' indulgence by their pilgrimage.

The next building we came to interested me more than any place exhibited by the monks, in all Palestine. It was the only place in the form of a building or habitation which it appeared reasonable or possible to believe in.—It professes to be the synagogue where Christ first taught in his native place,—of which the beautiful narrative is given in Luke IV. No scene in

* The following papal certificate, in printed form, is hung up on the wall of this apartment:—"Traditio continua est, et nunquam interrupta, apud omnes nationes Orientales, hanc petram, dictam Mensa Christi, illam ipsam esse supra quam Dominus noster Jesus Christus cum suis comedit discipulis, ante et post suam resurrectionem à mortuis. Et Sancta Romana Ecclesia Indulgentiam concessit septem annorum et totidem quadragenarum, omnibus Christi fidelibus hunc sanetum locum visitandibus, recitando saltem ibi unum Pater et Ave, dummodo sit in statu gratiae."

his ministry had ever fixed itself more distinctly in my youthful imagination than this ;—his reading from the scroll,—his delivering it to the attendant of the synagogue, and sitting down to expound what he had read, and open the promises of his mission ;—the curiosity first, and then the astonishment, and then the haughty wrath of his hearers, who were eager to learn what the carpenter's son had to say, but could no more endure the statement of his claims than the people of Jerusalem,—so famous for stoning the prophets. Now, it appears that a place of public worship is less likely to be forgotten as the scene of a remarkable event, than any private dwelling : and the riot which ensued on this occasion was likely to fix the circumstances in the memory of the resident Jews, for the three centuries which elapsed before the place was appropriated by tradition. From that time, it has always been believed in, and held successively by the Latins, devout Arabs, the Greeks, and now the Latins again. Of course, no one supposes the very stones of which it is built to be eighteen centuries old : but only that this is the spot on which there has always since been a building. It is now a small and very plain chapel ;—a mere old vaulted room, dim and antique-looking. I own that my heart did, for once, beat with the true pilgrim emotion while under the guidance of a monk.—This was to me, the true spot of the Annunciation,—of the annunciation of “the acceptable year of the Lord.” Here he sat where probably others of the Therapeutæ had sat, calling to him the broken-hearted and the captives, and the weary and heavy-laden : and when his critical townsmen were saying in their hearts “Physician, heal thyself,” he

announced to them such mighty things that were to be done above those which other teachers had offered, that they rose in wrath, and would fain have ended his life and doctrine together. As I have observed before, the aim of the Essene sect,—the physicians of bodies and souls,—was to bring out and restore the Moral Import of the Law ;—to revive the life of the Mosaic system. That this was also the aim of Jesus no one can read the gospels without perceiving : but this was a preparatory work ;—an all-important one in its season, and which required all the joint efforts of the missionaries whom he sent through the land : but it was still only preparatory, and to last while the Law and the authority of the Prophets lasted : and then was to come that new order of things which was called his kingdom. From that very day of his appearance, the blind guides of the people were to be shamed : the traditional fabrications and legal pedantries of the Pharisees were to be set aside for a worship which should be in spirit and in truth. The Mosaic system had become a sort of Dead Sea, overhung with heavy vapours, delusive to the eye, and pernicious to the life : and a wholesome breeze was now to sweep over it, and make all vital and translucent. But the Law itself was not yet to be touched : —not “one jot nor one tittle” was to pass away till the new kingdom was prepared. This kingdom was what he that day preached in the little synagogue at Nazareth. Others might have sat in the same seat who taught that which was truth and life in comparison with the teachings of the Pharisees : but here was One, —a townsman, whose countenance was familiar to all who heard him,—who proclaimed “the acceptable year

of the Lord," and announced the glad tidings of a kingdom to come.

There are several places on "the brow of the hill whereon the city was built" whence they might have intended to cast him down. The monks show an impossible place, two miles off. It was enough for us to station ourselves on the heights, and look about with clearer eyes than the monks could have helped us to.

I am not aware that we have any record of any appearance of Christ in the country west of Nazareth,—unless Dr. Robinson be right in differing from other authorities as to the position of Cana of Galilee.* As we rode, next day, however, from Nazareth to Mount Carmel, I could not but regard all we saw as having been familiar to his eyes ; and I was all day in a mood of rejoicing, for his sake, that this nook of the world was so full of loveliness. I cannot agree with those who regard the life of Jesus as the mournful scene which it is commonly conceived to be. It is natural enough for us to look upon it as mournful. The tenderness of our gratitude and love makes us dwell on the sad features of his lot ;—on the lowness of mind of his followers,—on the absence of sympathy in his family,—on the malice of his enemies,—on the apparent failure of his mission,—and on his humiliating and early death. But did these things make up his life ? Have we no truer and higher sympathy with him than to be always looking for the thorns that strewed his path, without remembering the glorious world that spread around him, and the clear heavens

* Biblical Researches, III. 204.

over his head? Had he not all the gifts of the soul,—a higher wealth than that of the whole world? Had he not the pleasures of moral sympathy? If he was tortured, even into expressions of vehement wrath, by the evil tempers of the Pharisees, had he not intense enjoyments from the same source of sensibility? Did not the widow at the treasury, and the centurion, and the Syro-Phenician woman, and the family at Bethany, and the penitent woman, and the beloved disciple, all administer intense satisfactions to him? Is it not true that the still under-current of human affairs and human character is the purest and sweetest; and that it is the turbulent and corrupt part of human life which comes to the surface, and engages the eyes and ears of men? And did not Jesus know what was in Man and in his life? Was not all that was pure and sweet and noble known and felt to its very depths by him, in proportion as he was himself transcendantly pure and sweet and noble? Is there no joy in aspiration? Was his soul sad when he said “the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee”? Are there no special satisfactions to the sons of God,—to the apostle,—to the redeemer of men? Is there no substantial happiness in steadfast devotedness?—no blissful thrill in self-sacrifice?—no sense of filial repose in such a martyrdom as his? To me it rather appears that if we were wise enough to enter into his experience as we ought, we should see that never before were a few months of life so crowded with joys as were those of the Ministry of Jesus. Think of the crowds who came to him with their several griefs, none of whom he sent away sorrowing:—think of the multitude of the

docile, and hopeful, and faithful with whom he had communion :—think of his refuge in his solitude of spirit, and of his heavenly seasons of contemplation and prayer :—think of what the mere face of nature must have been to one who looked upon it with a sense quickened and deepened like his :—think, in short, what a heaven he carried within and about him, and say whether we are not irreverent and undutiful and hard if we refuse to rejoice with him, as far as in us lies.

I think no one can refuse some such sympathy who follows his footsteps in his own Galilee. If the singers of Israel,—psalmists and prophets,—exalted Lebanon for its majesty,—its summits, its cataracts, its black cedars and its snows, they praised Carmel for its beauty and richness. These mountains stand throughout the Hebrew poetry, as the symbols of power and grace.—Lebanon has lost some of its stern cedar groves : but no changes of time can materially alter its character. Carmel has lost far more. Its fertility is much lessened, and the rich woods which once clothed the slopes are now thinned, where they have not disappeared. But nothing can impair the beauty of the position of Carmel, with the clear blue sea washing up to its base,—the shore and the green plain of Zabulon stretching away on another side, and a billowy expanse of wooded hills retiring inland, closed in by the lustrous roof of an Eastern sky.

The wooding of these Galilean hills was a surprise to us to-day. For about two hours after leaving Nazareth, the hills were stony, and scantily clothed, as where they rise from the plain of Esdraelon : but after that,

for about another hour, the scenery became so like that of the outskirts of an English park, as to give us the same home-feeling that we had in meeting familiar weeds on our entrance into the Holy Land. After crossing a stretch of the plain, which here runs in among the hills, and passing a round well, and clear, fern-grown spring, near the poor village which represents the once great city and university of Sepphoris, and then crossing more barley-fields, dropped over with clumps of fig and olive, and pomegranate coming into blossom, we entered upon the range of hills which we thought so English in their character. Rich grasses covered the slopes and feathered the glades, where the gleams and shadows and spring breezes were at their merry play. Clumps of ilex wooded every part,—casting shade into the levels, and overhanging the broken gravel-banks of the foreground. On we went, under spreading old trees, up hollow ways, along sunny glades, across grassy levels, till it was scarcely possible to believe where we were, and who had once been here.— Then we descended upon the plain of Zabulon, which is intersected by the Kishon, and inclosed by these hills, the Carmel range, and the sea. Here we came into full view of the Mediterranean, dashing its white foam upon the sands. The little town of Hayfa,* marked by the Consular flags on the roofs, lay at the foot of Carmel; and on its heights, we saw the Convent, to which we were bound. This is the most wooded side of Carmel, and it was clumped extensively with ilex. We rode briskly along the grassy road at its base, and crossed the Kishon where it gathered and spread among rocks,

* Sometimes called Caiffa ;—anciently Hefa.

and flocks of cattle and goats were crowded in and about the pool. It must have been near this spot that the great contest took place between the priests of Baal and Elijah,* that the people might no longer “halt between two opinions,” but choose which god they would follow. Here, at the base of Carmel, were, on the one hand, the four hundred and fifty priests of the Sun, with their garlands, altars, sacrifices ;—their jewels, their music, and their favouring multitude : and on the other hand, was the “hairy man girded with a leathern belt,” Elijah the Tishbite, with his servant, his altar of stones, and his faith in Jehovah. Here, amidst all the *appareil* of the splendid Sun God, who had the king and queen for worshippers, did Elijah mock,†—as man should never mock at any object of faith ; and here did he so bring round the multitude as that they lent themselves to his work of vengeance, and dragged down the whole body of the priests of the Sun to this river side, and slew them there. How different must the scene have been in that day from any thing that we saw ! The king Ahab and his Household Minister Obadiah, men of the opposite faiths, were abroad,—gone in different directions with attendants, to seek out the springs and fountains, and see if they could find grass enough to keep their beasts alive.‡ This plain was then brown and dusty with drought, where we were now riding over the turf and among wild-flowers, and passing cattle knee-deep in the cool waters. Where the fires of sacrifice were then blazing, and the plain was reeking in the heat under the coppery sky, and

* 1 Kings, XVIII.

† 1 Kings, XVIII. 27.

‡ 1 Kings, XVIII. 5, 6.

human blood was curdling in the hollows of the ground, we were pacing under the shade of woods, seeing the barley wave in the brecze, and crossing the clear rivulets that stole down from the heights.—When we were on the summit, I was yet more impressed with the contrast between the former day and this ; and especially when I took my last look abroad before retiring to rest.—As every one knows, the summit of Carmel commands a magnificent expanse of sea : and below that ridge it was that Elijah sat, with his head bowed on his knees, while his servant watched for signs of rain.* That servant looked abroad long and patiently over the salt sea and desolated land : and at last he saw only “a little cloud arising out of the sea, no bigger than a man’s hand :” and when he had come down, “the whole heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain.”—I looked abroad over the same scene this night. The whole mountain side, dressed with blossoms, and flowering shrubs, and fragrant herbs, was receiving the dews of the night. The plain, ready for harvest, lay dim below ;—the undulating line of the surf just showed where the land and the waters met ; and over the very horizon line of the heaving sea,—just where that little cloud might have come up,—the slender crescent of the young moon was dropping into the waves. Such is my vision of “the excellency of Carmel.”

It was not nearly sunset, however, when we arrived at the convent. The approach is through Hayfa, and by a rocky, grassy, wooded reach, to the foot of the ascent. The road up the mountain is very steep ; but

* 1 Kings, XVIII. 42—45.

it is fenced all the way; and the traveller almost forgets his fatigues in the glory of the views. Acre, on the northern horn of the bay of which Carmel is the southern, is very conspicuous,—lying white on its promontory.

The convent is spacious and handsome; and a second house is building, for the reception of Mohammedan visitors. There are now twelve monks in it; men of a far superior order, we thought, to most that we had met. Brother Charles, who was our chief friend among them, was a travelled man, and spoke French like his mother tongue. The convent was laid waste by the Turks, at the time when they came up and murdered two thousand wounded French soldiers, who were brought hither to be nursed: and in order to rebuild it, it was necessary to obtain 30,000*l.* Brother Charles travelled over Europe, to raise the money; and he seems to have called forth good will wherever he went. He shows an album which is as rich in the eminent names of Europe as his money bag was with its gold: and his open heart and manners indicate that he has lived in kindness, given and taken. Such seems to be the spirit of the establishment, where all strangers are welcome,—where the hungry are fed, the sick are nursed, and no question is made of matters of faith and opinion. I wish this example of the Christian spirit had been as operative on all who have benefited by it as one might have hoped it would be: but there is at least one person in the world whose heart cannot be softened by the hospitable spirit of this place. If the Pharisees were right in their doctrine of the transmigration of souls, one of them has got into this man,—a minister of the

Free Church of Scotland, who delivers his paltry soul by pouring himself out in the Visitors' Book of the convent. The brethren made him as comfortable as they could, and supplied him with the little dainties of distillery and cookery, and from the garden and mountain side, which they prepare with their own hands, for the indulgence of their visitors. The holy man states this in the inscription he has left : says that here are all the luxuries of the body ; but asks where, in this convent, are we to look for the salvation of the soul ? He ends by declaring himself constrained to cry out, "Where now is the Lord God of Elijah ?" The grateful visitors who have succeeded this person have not spared him. Between those who are shocked at his ingratitude and pride, and those who are amused at his self-complacency and bad taste, he is now pretty well punished in the Visitors' Book at Mount Carmel ; so I will spare him the telling of his name.

The church of the convent is handsome ; and it contains a picture worth noting — the portrait of St. Theresa, whom I agree with Bossuet in thinking one of the most interesting of the saints of his church. The bringing together of remote thoughts in travel is as remarkable to the individual as the bringing together of remote personages in the action of human life. How I used to dwell on the image of St. Theresa in my childhood, and long, in an ignorant sympathy with her, to be a nun ! And then, as I grew wiser, I became ashamed of her desire for martyrdom, as I should have been of any folly in a sister, and kept my fondness for her to myself. But all the while, that was the Theresa of Spain,—now wandering among the Moors in search

of martyrdom, and now shutting herself up in her hermitage in her father's garden at Avila. It had never occurred to me that I should come upon her traces at Mount Carmel. But here she was, worshipped as the reformatrix of her order. It was she who made the Carmelites bare-footed ;—*i.e.*, sandaled instead of shod. It was she who dismissed all the indulgences which had crept in among her order; and she obtained by her earnestness such power over the baser parts of human nature in those she had to deal with, as to reform the Carmelite order altogether, and witness before her death, the foundation of thirty convents, wherein her rule was to be practised in all its severity. Martyrdom by the Moors was not good enough for her: it would have been the mere gratification of a selfish craving for spiritual safety. She did much more for God and man by living to the age of sixty-seven, and bringing back the true spirit into the corrupted body of her order. Here she is,—the woman of genius and determination,—looking at us from out of her stiff head-gear,—as true a queen on this mountain throne as any empress who ever wore a crown.

We saw the cave where Elijah is said to have hidden himself; and were shown the “Pharmacie” of the monks,—who distill excellent cordials;—and their gardens,—on three terraces. But our walk down the mountain side was our best entertainment. We thrust our way among flowering shrubs, tall hollyhocks, ilex and herbs of many savours, down and down, by a zigzag path, to the School of the Prophets. It may be remembered that Obadiah,* the Household Minister of

* 1 Kings, XVIII. 4.

Ahab, hid a hundred of the prophets of the Lord in two caves. This is shown as one of these caves; some, however, calling it the place of Elijah's altar. It is a very fine grotto, in the finest position that fugitives could desire;—hardly within hearing of the waves washing the base of the mountain, but overlooking a wide expanse of sea and shore. The grotto is evidently artificial, at least in its finish; and Pococke supposes it to be entirely cut out of the rock. It is about 15 feet high, 40 long, and 20 wide. Some simple tombs of those who have died here are at hand; and among them is that of an infant of the British Consul at Jerusalem, whose lady was tenderly nursed here by the kind-hearted monks.

Our hosts apologised for our dinner to-day. It was Friday; and they gave us fish, soup-maigre and eggs, and promised meat to-morrow. But these good things, with liqueurs, “tonics” and coffee, gave us a very gentle idea of fasting. We had to amuse us within doors, an ancient map of Jerusalem, which may be said to be as much like that city as any other; and some European newspapers, sent up to us from the Harlequin, which was riding in the bay below, and whose officers had scampered after us during our morning ride,—rattled up to the convent,—taken breath, and galloped down again,—jumped into the Harlequin's boat,—sent her back again with these newspapers, and had them pitched up the mountain, in no time. I doubt whether “Arab intensity” itself transcends that of British naval officers, on a scamper ashore. We hoped that their dragoman was reclining at ease somewhere, to recover his breath and spirits.

The next day, April 17th, we had a charming ride to Acre and back. Not being troubled with baggage mules, we could ride as we pleased ; and delightful it was to canter along the Bay of Acre, over the firm sand. There were three wrecks ashore, telling of recent storms where all was now so bright and glorious. We had to cross the Kishon, where it flows into the sea ; and it was deep enough to require some care. We escaped a wetting by sending in a man, who had already waded through, and who showed us the best fording place. We crossed another stream,—the Belus. A great quantity of sponge is thrown up on this coast.

Acre is a wretched-looking place at present. The natural features about it are beautiful ;—its sea, and the rocks under water, a perfect feast to the eye : but the town itself is a sad image of ruin. The bazaars are poor ; the people dull ; and the mighty fortifications battered to pieces. The outer walls were in course of repair ; and among the workmen, we observed some convicts in chains.—The distance of Acre from our convent we reckoned to be from fourteen to sixteen miles. When we returned, we were duly hungry ; but were entreated to wait an hour for dinner, as more guests had arrived. —We languished in hunger till half past six, when we were summoned to table in the saloon. There was no dinner on the table ; nor did it come for a quarter of an hour,—during which time we had sufficient amusement in contemplating our position. Here was the Russian Countess, whom we had left prostrated in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, her attendant lady, physician, and secretary. Beside these fiercely moustached gentlemen, sat two smooth shaven,

neat Americans. Here was a party, collected from the ends of the earth, and set down on the top of Mount Carmel, to be waited on by monks! Such a party made the good monks very busy. It was uncomfortable to think of the severity of their rule, when I saw the dinner they set before us:—first, soup and fish: then boiled fowls: then roast fowls: then broiled fowls: and finally, a huge bowl of rich custard.

The next morning our convent friends and we parted in hearty friendship; and we paced unwillingly down the mountain, and turned away from the sea. Our ride back to Nazareth made as sweet a Sunday morning of this as we could have anywhere enjoyed. All was fresh and quiet in the plain, and by the Kishon,—whose windings we now followed, and in the glades of what we called the park scenery of Galilee.—We obtained a finer view than before of Nazareth from the brow of the hill; and on dismounting, went again into the church, to enjoy the fine chaunting.

Our mule and its driver awaited us, as we had been led to expect. Just as Alee had foretold, the creature was declared by the Governor of Djeneen to have been found upon the mountain; and fourteen piastres were charged for the trouble of its recovery. Like thieves in general, the people of Djeneen are very impolitic. The place has such a bad reputation that they find themselves generally avoided by travellers. If they do not mend their morals, they will soon see no more strangers,—sell no more provisions in that market, and be no more wanted as guards.

CHAPTER VIII.

CANA.—MOUNT OF THE BEATITUDES.—TIBERIAS.—PLAIN OF GENNESARETH.—SZAFFAD.—UPPER VALLEY OF THE JORDAN.—PANIAS.—LEAVING PALESTINE.

WE left Nazareth in a drizzling rain. It had delayed us till half-past eight o'clock ; but we were anxious to be off,—the air was so hot and close in the convent. On the hills we met the breeze ; and we enjoyed it without being aware how much we should miss it, and sigh for a breath of wind, during the next two days. Travellers going to Tabarea (Tiberias) should be warned what the place is like, that they may not be deluded, as we were, with pleasant visions of rest by the lake-side ; but take their survey, and ride away again, before they are made ill by the oppression of the atmosphere. I would not judge by our own passing experience ; but I believe most or all of the travellers who have remained any time at Tiberias since the great earthquake, have complained of its climate and its vermin.

At about an hour and a half from Nazareth, Giuseppe turned up the hills to the right, and made signs to us to follow him, though the baggage-mules and servants continued along the valley. We did not know what we were to see. We passed through a poor hamlet, which however had a copious spring, and a good growth of

figs :—and we came out upon a little Greek church ;—the most sordid church, I think, I ever saw. We waited outside for the key,—still in entire ignorance of where we were. Close by the church-door grew several pomegranate-trees, two of which were covered with magnificent blossoms. An old woman came with the key, and led us up to a stone shaft, breast-high, with an irregular hollow at the top, which made it resemble a clumsy, unfinished font. This was the only remaining water-pot, we were told, which had held the wine at a marriage feast here; for this was Cana of Galilee. I need not say that this was no water-pot. Dr. Robinson questions this being the real Cana: but tradition is in favour of this site; and there is no evident reason against the ordinary belief. I was glad to have been here; and I brought away two pomegranate blossoms, as memorials of the place.

We were as sure now as we could feel at Jerusalem of our being on the tracks of the Teacher. Everywhere about the lake, he travelled and taught; and we might, anywhere here, look round us with the certainty of seeing what he saw. A mountain near our road to-day, about five hours, I think, from Nazareth, called by the natives the Horns of Hottein, is named by the Christians the Mount of the Beatitudes, from the tradition that here Jesus delivered the Sermon on the Mount. With those who believe that that body of holy instructions was delivered on several occasions, and therefore most probably in different places, this tradition will have no weight: nor has it, I believe, with any but the local guides. It is an oblong hill, green and fertile on its eastern side, and with two

eminences at one end of its ridge,—from which it derives its native name. If Jesus did not sit there to teach, he probably reclined there, as on all the hills near, in the course of his way-faring, to look abroad: and from hence he could see far. He could see over the Plain of Jezreel, which was, to every Jew, so full of recollections, at once religious and historical. He could overlook the Lake of Galilee, and follow with his eye the fishing-boats where were some whom he designed to make fishers of men. He could see on the shores, and in the recesses of the hills, and at the opening of the Plain of Gennesareth to the north, the cities over whose hard worldliness he mourned, conceiving of them as lost, like Tyre and Sidon over to the west, and Sodom and Gomorrah to the south. Here were all his haunts in this district, in his view at once:—Mount Tabor near at hand: and below, the shore of the lake, the boats, Capernaum and Bethsaida, and the solitudes to which he withdrew himself for contemplation and prayer,—for rest to his soul. And here he could meditate how yet more strongly, yet more clearly and incessantly, he could convey to his followers and the multitude his warnings against the husky religion of the Pharisees, and his blessings on the pure, the sincere, the devoted, the peaceable, and the humble spirit, of which it was hard for the pupils of the scribes and Pharisees to conceive. And unlike indeed was his method of teaching to theirs. “He taught as one having authority, and not as the Scribes.” The people were accustomed to book-language, to legal terms, of admonitions about ritual matters: in short, to solemn trifling from mere expositors. Now they were refreshed,

through their whole heart and soul, by cheerful, familiar, colloquial, original teaching from a prophet, who spoke without book, and so directly and simply that the children might understand. Our lifelong reverence for him, and our sabbatical associations with the records of his words, naturally unfit us at home for perceiving the intense familiarity of his teachings, and the beauty of that method of appeal. What we feel to be so deeply true and beautiful, we utter reverently,—as we ought: and the imagery is to us something foreign, and belonging to a remote poetical and spiritual region; so that the names and images cannot slip over the tongue like those of the corresponding imagery at home. We even shrink from a full realisation of the truth as from a kind of irreverence;—so that, at this moment, I find it difficult to say plainly what I mean. What I mean is plainly this. If Jesus were of Saxon race, and came now to reform and free our souls, his imagery would be our rural cottages and the alleys of our towns; the redbreast, the dog-rose and bramble; as in Galilee they were the rock and sand-built houses, the ravens and the lilies of the field. He would call our political and religious sects, our Magistrates and Bishops, by their ordinary names: and so, assuredly, he would the towns which received, and those which rejected his teachings. It may sound irreverent, but it ought not to do so, to conceive of him as saying “Alas! for you, Liverpool,—alas! for you, Bristol!” and as declaring that proud Edinburgh or London should be humbled. When one stands where I stood this day, above the lake, and among the wild flowers, and within sight of the places of the denounced cities, one feels a more

intense relief,—a more cheerful and animated love for those effectual discourses, than can ever be felt at home except by such as have sufficient strength of imagination and of piety, and sufficient knowledge, to transport themselves to the Teacher's side, in his own native region, and learn from himself alone,—putting aside all devices and superstitions of men,—what it was that he would say to every one of us. To my apprehension, on the spot, and with the records of his life in my hand, and the recollections of Egypt and of Sinai fresh in my mind, nothing could be simpler than his recorded words, and nothing less like what is superstitiously and irreverently taught, as coming from him, in most of the churches of Christendom. Here he stood as the way, the truth and the life :—the Messiah who was, as he believed, to lead his people into a new and spiritual kingdom, into which mankind might enter, when the Law had been fulfilled. Here he stood as the truth and the life, to bring men into that closer connexion with God as their Father which was to be added to their ancient relation to Jehovah as their King. He strove to detach their minds from the forms and means of religion, and fix their hearts upon its life and reality. He strove to raise them into a condition of earnestness, sincerity, and gentle affections towards God, and their neighbours, and their enemies : and to fit them thus for entrance upon his new kingdom of righteousness, whose approaching establishment was his great topic of promise. And he used for all this a method of appeal, such as every effectual teacher must use,—appeal to their daily knowledge and observation, to their social experience, their domestic affections,—in

short, their very commonest affairs and interests. He spoke of the kneading of bread, the bottling of wine, the sowing of seed, the mending of clothes, the moth and the rust, and the washing of dishes, as well as of thrones of clouds, and of the lightning which shines from one end of the heaven to the other.

The first thing I looked for, on coming within sight of the lake, was fishing boats. I had read and heard that we should see none ; the poor and indolent inhabitants having never replaced the last they had, which was destroyed above thirty years ago : but yet, I could not help hoping that they might have exerted themselves by this time, to obtain the means of fishing in their waters. But they fish merely by casting nets, thrown from the beach or the rocks : and there was now no boat, nor any sign of human activity, as far as we could see. Mountains, valleys, and lake all lay dead. At this first view, I thought I had never seen a sheet of water so entirely without beauty. Even the Dead Sea had looked less hot, less dull, and much less insignificant. This, however, was the view from a considerable height ; and its aspect improved when we had descended the long, winding road, and Tiberias was in the foreground, and the waters had become a deep blue, instead of a leaden grey.

But, of all desolations, that of the town is the worst. Outside, it has a substantial appearance, from the apparent strength of the walls, and the number of their towers : but the walls are split and loosened, and the towers decapitated by the earthquake which laid low the rest of the city in 1835. Within the gates, there is really scarcely anything left but heaps of ruins.

The town is like one vast dust-hole, swarming with vermin. We found afterwards that our late comrades had been more prudent than ourselves, and had refused to be housed in the town. They pitched their tents outside. We permitted ourselves to be guided to the house of a worthy German Jew, who sincerely desires, as does his wife, to make his guests comfortable, but who cannot achieve it in such a place, and such a climate.—Our sitting room looked tempting when we entered it ; shady, airy, with a newly chalked floor, and neat deewán,—windows closed only by shutters,—chickens chirping just below them,—and a martin's nest built on the top of the chain, from which hangs the lamp in winter. It was no fault of our host's that we presently felt as if a fever was coming on,—breathless and uneasy. This was the fault of the climate ; and for four-and-twenty hours after, we did not draw a free breath. We had met with something of this before descending to the Lake : as was proved by our not having ascended Mount Tabor. I earnestly wished it ; but the gentlemen decreed that it would be imprudent, on account of the heat : and they promised that we should go to-morrow.

On the morrow, I did beg hard to be allowed to go : but the whole party were panting, as if in a vapour bath ; my companions were fatigued by the wretched night they had had : and the gentlemen declared themselves actually unable to make the exertion. I felt that I could, and that the fresh air on the hills would more than compensate for the fatigue : and it was nearly settled that I should set off, attended by Alee : but we were assured that it would be unsafe for so

small a party to go : and I was obliged to give it up. This was the only serious omission that I am aware of in our whole journey : but there could hardly be one which we could regret more.

We staid within all the morning, on account of the heat : but in the afternoon, we found the house insufferable, and went out to seek relief in change of place. We found the town to be what its appearance indicated yesterday,—mere toppled stones patched up into dwellings, with ruins lying all about. On many roofs we saw little square chambers built of reeds, with green boughs for a finish ;—tabernacles to sleep in, somewhat like those which used to be on every house top, at the old Feasts of Tabernacles. Some of these looked small enough to be mere pigeon-houses : but the inhabitants creep into them for the night, and sometimes by day, for refuge from the heat and vermin below.—We walked southwards beside the Lake, towards the Baths : and found the waters clear ; the beach composed of large round pebbles ;—the oleanders coming into blossom all along the shore ;—and massive ruins strewn about, and even extending a considerable way under water. Our host pointed out some of these wrecks as the remains of a bathing-house which Moses and Miriam had here ! And yet this man was a German Jew, who might be expected to know something of the entrance of his people upon the Promised Land.

From time to time, within the last few days, we had met parties of travellers who looked like invalids : and, on inquiry, we found they had been to these Baths of Tabarea, to which the sick resort from all parts of the

country. We found a considerable number of people in and about the baths to-day. The water, where it bubbles up from the earth, was so hot that I could not bear my finger in it for many seconds. It leaves a yellow and black scum on the earth and stones over which it passes ; and travellers who have bathed in the otherwise cold waters of the lake, near where the mineral spring flows in, say that they found themselves in a tepid bath. Mrs. Y. and I were permitted to enter the women's bath. Through the dense steam, I saw a reservoir in the middle of the apartment, where, as I need not say, the water stands to cool for some time before it can be entered :—several women were standing in it ; and those who had come out were sitting on a high shelf in a row, to steam themselves thoroughly before they put on their clothes. The crowd and the steam were so oppressive, that I wondered how they could stay : but the noise was not to be endured for a moment. Every woman of them all seemed to be gabbling at the top of her voice, and we rushed out after a mere glance, stunned and breathless. To this moment, I find it difficult to think of these creatures as human beings : and certainly I never saw anything, even in the lowest slave districts of the United States, which so impressed me with a sense of the impassable differences of race.—We sought refreshment, on our return, in a different sort of bathing. We were longing for coolness above everything ; so Mrs. Y. and I went into the Lake from a fine old roofless tower, which had been shattered by the earthquake. At its base, the water was four feet deep ; and through the wide rents in its wall, the

moonlight broke the deep shadows on the waters, and rippled on the surface.

Ibraheem Pasha built some pretty baths at the hot springs we had visited ; and repaired them two or three times, after injuries from robbers. But the robbers were the stronger party : and they came so often, that the baths are deserted and going to ruin. The marble floor, deewáns and reservoir are now all dusty and desolate.

The refreshment from our bath passed away so immediately that we were convinced that our lassitude and distress were from the atmosphere. We gave orders for a very early departure the next morning, and had no comfort meantime.

Our host had lost his wife, and all his children but one, and was himself lamed, by the earthquake of 1835. It seems strange that he should remain in such a place,—marrying a new wife, and rearing a second family on the very spot where such a misfortune had happened, and might at any moment recur. But Tiberias is one of the four Holy Cities of the Talmud ; and is sure therefore to be always frequented by Jews. We had visited two of the four cities,—Hebron and Jerusalem ; and to-morrow we were to arrive at the fourth, Szaffad.

According to our host, the population of Tabarea is at least what it was before the earthquake. Eight hundred people were then destroyed, and very few were left. Now there are about a thousand in all: viz., 400 Mohammedans ; 400 Jews ; and 200 Christians.

Before four o'clock, the next morning, April 21st, I was looking abroad from a sort of terrace, where

I had gone, as soon as dressed, for air, when I saw a curious sight. The neighbours were not up; and I overlooked many households asleep on their roofs. They had laid their mattresses there, and slept in their ordinary clothes, with a coverlet thrown over them. As the day-light brightened upon their faces, one after another began to wake,—the children stirring first. They rolled and rubbed their eyes, threw off their coverlets, and jumped up,—dressed for the day, apparently.

From point to point of our journey this day, Tiberias looked well, seated on the shore between the hills and the lake, and inclosed by its turreted wall. Our road wound up and along the hills, and sometimes overhung the beach, as we went northwards towards the plain of Gennesareth. This beach must always have been pretty enough, with its boulders, and flowering shrubs, and white pebbles, and clear waters, to make it pleasant for the traveller to imagine it, in the days when the multitude collected there to greet and hear the Teacher, and when the disciples sat there mending their nets, as their boats floated a little way from the land. But it is difficult to conceive that this volcanic basin can ever have been a healthy abode for men. As I looked over it all this day, it struck me how dreary it must be in a storm. A murkiness hangs upon it in the brightest weather: and when, of old, a squall came down from among the inclosing hills, and overtook the vessel labouring in the midst of the lake, a more dreary scene of elemental commotion could hardly be imagined; nor a more welcome relief when “the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.”

As we descended into the plain of Gennesareth, we perceived it to be abundantly watered; and our track was muddy;—a new incident to us. Migdol,—the old Magdala,—is now a wretched village. We passed massive ruins of some ancient structures;—weed-grown walls overhanging a clear running stream, and embosomed in blossoming shrubs. The plain was scantily cultivated; but so thickly-grown with weeds as to show how fertile it might still be.—Clouds passed over us from the north-west; sprinkling heavy drops as they went; and they were succeeded by hot sunshine: but these changes seemed to have no effect on the weather in the basin below, where all was a leaden gray.—We ascended by narrow tracks, rocky hills which occasionally afforded some relief of table-land, with its settlements and orchards; but which became steeper and longer as we approached Szaffad, (the ancient Saphet) which we reached in about eight hours from Tiberias. In one pass, about two hours short of Szaffad, we saw portals in the precipice, which told of sepulchres within.

Szaffad is an extraordinary place; and I could not but wonder that we brought so few associations to the spot as we did. It is the magnificent crest of some of the loftiest summits in Palestine; and it is seen towering above every object on this side Lebanon, from a great distance every way. Dr. Robinson saw it from Nazareth; and from it may be seen, in clear weather, Carmel, and the mountains of Samaria beyond the plain of Esdraëlon, and the extremity of the Lake of Tiberias, where the Jordan issues from it. The atmosphere was not clear enough this evening, for us to see

these things : but our eyes were amply entertained with what lay nearer.—The whole vicinity is very fertile, the ruins of former streets being made to support, as terraces, the soil from which spring corn, olives, figs and vines, in great quantities. The situation of the place is so lofty, and its air so pure in comparison with that of the plains in every direction, that it was greatly resorted to for health, in the days of its prosperity : and even from Damascus the royal children were, in ancient times, sent hither for change of air, and enjoyment of the abundant fruits. It is plentifully and incessantly watered : so that one would think,—with good soil, air and water,—nothing could impair the natural prosperity of the place. Yet it is a most mournful ruin. The earthquake is the foe that has laid it low. It played its dreadful pranks as vivaciously here as on the lower grounds. The town, divided into quarters, lay on the summits of four hills, with its massive castle towering above as the centre of the noble diadem. Now, these quarters are four enormous heaps of rubbish. The houses having been built in tiers, fell, one row upon another, so as to make the ruin complete: and now, the vines are trained over the fallen roofs ; and from the heaped stones, sordid abodes are scooped out, to lodge those who will not leave the fated place.

Not only are there many who will not leave the place, but numbers are perpetually arriving, to live and die, at this, the most sacred of the four Holy Cities. One of the quarters was appropriated to the Jews ; and at one time there were not fewer than 12,000 at Szaffad. While the place declined, from being often

retaken by Christians and Mohammedans, other classes of inhabitants left it, or reduced their numbers: but the Jews remained. They had an university and a printing establishment, from which they sent forth learned men and the records of their lore. One reason of the sacredness of the place is the tradition that Queen Esther was born there: another, that many eminent rabbins are buried there: a third, that it is one of the four Holy Cities: but the strongest reason of all is the prevalent belief that the Messiah will first come to Szaffad; and will reign there for forty years before he goes to Jerusalem. Those whom he finds watching, he will highly exalt, as the watchers believe; and their hope is to obtain offices of honour in his kingdom. Even the dead will be the better for having died there: and thus, many a poor Polish or Italian Jew toils and saves, and saves and toils, to get to Szaffad, to end his days. On his arrival, he is presently stripped of his savings, by the local exactions which have been ordained to meet such cases as his; and then he lives on as he can: but, be his wretchedness what it may, he never leaves Szaffad. The employments here are chiefly indigo-dyeing, spinning and weaving cotton, growing fruit, and preparing wine. I observed a few palms still, though I thought we had seen the last of them: and abundance of pomegranates, lemons and walnuts.

Our encampment was beside a cemetery, in a little valley between two of the four eminences mentioned above. The castle towered above it; and the hill sides were marked by winding ways up to the summits. Near us was a copious spring, flowing into a cistern, where

noisy women were thronging all day. When I went in the evening to see the spring, the women were boisterous and rude, pulling at my dress, trying whether my hat would come off, and so on: even though our dragoman was within sight: but when we entered two or three houses, to taste wine and make inquiries, the people were very civil.—While daylight lasted, there was a row of gazers crouched on the grass before the tent, peeping in so pertinaciously,—in spite of warning, and a few blows from the servants, that we were obliged to let down the curtains. We spent the daylight hours in walking about the remains of the town, and looking abroad from the loftiest points. I was on nearly the highest ground when the sun went down behind the western mountain, dim, and as pale as the moon. All transparency seemed to be departing from the atmosphere; and where the Sea of Tiberias should have been, there was at last only a blot of dark grey vapour. The wind was rising and falling, and the aspect of this once great city and stronghold was most cheerless.

The night and morning being rainy, we rose late,—at half past six; and merely looked about us, without attempting to start till the weather cleared: but by nine o'clock, the clouds were gone, except a few fleeces hanging about the mountains; and, as we descended Djebel Szaffad, we saw to the utmost advantage the wonderful ruin crowning the steeps above us, and the beautiful Upper Valley of the Jordan, now opening before us. Its scenery is of a mild and soft character; and we saw it well under the gleamy lights of a changing day. We could fancy we saw almost to

Damascus, over the intervening mountain ranges. But we soon descended so far as rapidly to narrow the view ; and presently we found ourselves in a gorge, leading to a rich little plain, or recess among the hills, where the fields were waving with corn, and much cattle was collected about a spring in the rock, with, apparently, scarcely any one near to take care of either. We found that this cultivation was the work of the industrious Szaffad people, who, with a much better soil and fuller return, seem to practise a tillage as laborious as that of the people of the Alps.

Passing over low hills to the left, we descended upon the plain of the Upper Jordan, where the tracks were so well marked that I felt myself independent of our guides, and could ride on as I pleased. There was a little dull lake lying in the plain, to the north, with flat, swampy shores and grey waters, which would not have interested us but for its ancient reputation. This was Lake Houle,—“the Waters of Merom,” of Scripture,—where Joshua conquered the kings of Canaan who had united their forces there. A space of five miles intervenes between this lake and the hills at whose base we were riding. No two travellers agree about its size ; the reason of which is that it is always changing,—being a mere marsh in the hot season, and a brimming lake after the rains of winter. We saw it in its half and half state ; and without the enlivenment of the water fowl which scream and splash away among its sedges, in their own season.

The character of the scenery had now entirely changed, and become something quite new to us. The fatness of the valley reminded us, through this and the

succeeding day, of all the scripture imagery relating to fertility which we had not seen exemplified in the higher and drier western regions. Even here, we were on high ground compared with that part of the Jordan valley which we had struck at Jericho : for the waters of Lake Houle rattle down a long descent for eight of the ten miles which lie between it and the sea of Tiberias ; and then again flow down a descent all the way to the Dead Sea : but even here, at the upper end of the Jordan valley, there was moisture and marsh and aquatic produce on every hand. On the richest of the pastures were feeding the flocks of the Bedoueens, while the black tents of the herdsmen speckled the uplands. The acacia and the plane began to draw together in clumps, and spread a broader shade. The cranes waded in taller grass, and winged their flight in larger flocks. Fat buffalo wallowed in the pools : and innumerable little tortoises perked up their impudent heads from every streamlet and swamp. Men and boys stood almost hidden in the canebrakes, cutting reeds : ants swarmed in the tracks, and shining lizards darted about among the stones at the skirts of the hills. Here and there were long reaches of tilled land, where the people were busy among their barley crops : and the smokes of two or three hamlets arose from promontories that jutted out into the streams which were making their way to the Jordan.

While we were in the full enjoyment of all this, we were delighted to learn that we were to stop at one of the most tempting spots we had seen. We had travelled little more than four hours : but we had arrived at the frontier line which divides the Pashalics

of Acre and Damascus ; and there was an establishment of guards which it was as well to take advantage of for our security at night. These people take toll here ;—seven piastres for every loaded camel, and so on. They live in reed huts,—very picturesque, but little serviceable : and the settlement consists merely of three or four of these huts, and a mill. The stream below the mill spreads out among reeds and little thickets ; and it is crossed by a long row of stepping-stones. The mill-race guided us up to a pile of rocks, behind which lay a large pond, or small lake, with tiny pebbly beaches, and promontories and little precipices,—the whole hedged in by close thickets of flowering oleanders and other blossoming shrubs. From one of these tiny white beaches, I saw, by a pencil of light in a dark cove, a black duck at anchor ; so still that it looked as if it would never move again. I returned to the tent for bathing apparatus ; crossed the stream by the stepping-stones, went behind the deserted mill, and into the mill-race. The water was so warm that I was tempted to explore this delicious nook by means of it. One dark recess or cavern, in which the water was not above three feet deep, looked most enticing. I found it hung with vines, and tufted with delicate ferns, which waved in the continual breeze made by the passage of the water. A gush of light through a very low arch in the rock tempted me on. I stooped through it, and found myself in the shady cove I had seen from the little beach, with the black duck beside me, still at anchor.

Many hours of the day were yet before us, for rambling, reading, sewing and bringing up our journals.

I do not know that we had anywhere a more welcome rest than here on this frontier line of Damascus. And it was not quite our last day in the Holy Land.

We saw from our camp a mysterious-looking arch, high up on the western hill side. I went before breakfast, the next morning (April 23rd), to see what it was. I obtained a glorious view by going; but I was no wiser about the arch. I found three arches,—two of them being parallel, built close together, and corresponding precisely to the mouth of the cave before which they stood. An aqueduct being out of the question in such a place, I cannot imagine what these erections could be. The cave, and two others near, were evidently in use; for there were rags and mats strewn about, and recent marks of fire. The view was so exquisite, from the verge of the plain to the south to the snowy peak of Hermon on the north, that I would fain have stayed on the heights, to see the first flood of sunshine cast over the scene: but far below, Giuseppe was setting our breakfast table in the open air; and I must go.

To-day we crossed the valley of the Jordan at its northern end, which is closed in by Mount Hermon, now called Djebel Sheikh. The place where we took our mid-day rest was the ancient Dan. We now knew the country from Dan to Beersheba.—At the extremity of the Valley, the mountains gradually subside,—their lower slopes being wooded hills which we skirted during the latter part of this day's ride. We were now familiar with the course of the Jordan,—from its springs, which we were about to visit, to its present southern limit,—the Dead Sea,—and again, to the point

where it is believed to have once flowed into the Red Sea at Akaba. We had in Edom travelled in its ancient channel;—that channel which has been dry for some thousands of years: and now we were visiting its sources.

Before we reached the first of these, we crossed a fine old bridge, of three arches, roughly paved at the top, and without any parapet, though it sprang to a great height above the rushing river. Its yellow stone contrasted finely with the dark green of the thickets which covered the banks of the stream; and the profusion of the blossoms of the oleander cast a pink glow over these dark thickets. Several herds-men had brought their cattle down to drink; and men and cattle were reposing in the shade. It was an exquisite picture.

The first of the supposed sources of the Jordan which we reached was at Tel-el-Kader. A pretty wooded hill, level at the top, rises from the plain; and from its base issue some abundant springs, which dash forward among stones so as to make a rapid. Here we staid some time to rest; and I sat on a large stone in the water, watching the bubbling out of the spring among the ferns and rock fissures, and shaded by a figtree loaded with green fruit.

From thence to Panias,—the Cæsarea Philippi of the New Testament,—our ride was through scenery resembling that which we had called park-land between Nazareth and Mount Carmel. We had the same slopes, broken banks, shady hollows and sunny glades;—and the same wild flowers by the way side.

We had long seen the great Saracenic castle of

Panias on its mountain top,—looking almost too high to be reached by man or beast. As we approached we found another castle below, standing beside the village: and ancient ruins appeared to be scattered here and there, far and wide over the gloriously beautiful scene.—Out of Poussin's pictures, I never saw any thing in the least like the scene, as we looked at it from under the shade of the olive grove wherein our tents were pitched. Yet Poussin himself, who put more objects distinctly into his landscapes than any other painter, could not have included all that was here harmoniously combined by Nature's master hand:—the deep shadow from beneath which we looked forth,—the undulating ground,—the high grass and weeds,—the ravine below,—the massive peaked ruin near,—the red rocks in front,—the western mountains,—the town on its terrace, embosomed in woods and hills,—the poplar clump,—the mulberry grove,—the gay horseman fording the stream,—and the high grounds backing all;—this combination was magnificent. In Europe, how far would travellers go to see such a landscape!

Three of us set forth immediately, to learn something of the objects of the place: but our guide could speak nothing but Arabic; and he led us by such a toilsome path, over rubbish and among a perfect jungle of weeds, that I turned back, leaving the gentlemen to *reconnître* in preparation for to-morrow's sight-seeing, while I went down into the ravine to bathe. The stream gushed between two faces of rock, where the wild vines made a natural trellise over head; and under that green canopy I was tempted

on and on by the sound of a waterfall, which, pouring down from the foundations of an old ruin, made a charming shower bath. What a luxury was our daily revel in cold water, after our recent weeks of Desert travelling !

Meantime, the gentlemen found the shrine of old Pan,—from whom the place derived its most ancient and most modern name ; the Roman name by which it was known at the time of the New Testament history being intermediate between the two. We went to it, the next morning ; and an extraordinary place we found it. In a precipitous face of rock is a large, dim grotto,—perfectly dry when we were there, and showing no trace of the passage of waters. A fig tree issued from a crevice in the cave, and, reaching the roof, and thence drooping its large leaves, filled the place with a soft green light. In the depth of the recess was a niche,—empty now ; for the great Pan is dead ! Above the cave, in the face of the rock, is a large niche ; and others are beside it, each at a lower height, till two just show themselves above the stony ground. These niches are arched off with graceful shell ornaments ; and in one of them is the base of a statue, showing how it had been occupied. These were the shrines of the Nymphs ; now empty ;—for the Nymphs fled when the great Pan died. When I used to read, over and over, that fine old story of how, when the heavenly host told the shepherds at Bethlehem of the birth of Christ, a deep groan, heard through all the isles of Greece, told that the great Pan was dead, and that all the royalty of Olympus was dethroned, and the several deities were sent wandering in cold and darkness, how little did I dream that I

should ever visit any spot where the noble fable would appear like historical truth ! Yet here was the place ! As Osiris had passed away before ; and the widowed Isis, who was to have mourned him eternally, had also melted away ; and Pan, whether another or the same, succeeded him in the homage of men ;—so Pan, in his turn, retired and humbled himself when this beloved fountain of his was taken from him, and called Jordan, and then pined and died when one was born by whom his empire was overthrown. It was when he thus retired, in the decline of his glory, that this spot assumed its Hebrew sanctity ;—a sanctity miserably understood and expressed, as we see by the setting up of golden calves to Jehovah, as the Amun of the Hebrews, on this northern limit of the promised land, and at the source of its great river : and before it was hallowed afresh at the death of Pan, Herod here offered his flatteries to Roman power, by building a great palace for the Emperor, and calling the old Panium by the name of Cæsarea Philippi. This was the name of the place when He came hither whose gospel of Peace was disarming and dethroning the old idols of mankind. Hither he came, not waging war with idols or with men, but walking among these hills, asking of his followers * “ Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am ? ” and then charging “ his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.” Here it was that he made those promises to Peter of high office in his approaching kingdom, on which the Romish church has built her power, and on the plea of which she maintains and will long maintain it. In that church the discrowned deities, dismissed

* Matt. XVI. 13, 20 ; Mark, VIII. 27, 30.

from their shrines here and elsewhere, have found a long refuge. If Pan is dead, they are not: for all the idolatries most congenial to undisciplined human nature are concentrated there, and brought into strange association with the faith and name of him at whose birth they came down from their thrones. And their power is great enough still, outside the pale of that church, as well as within it, to desecrate and corrupt the faith which has succeeded to their own. They have but too much part still, every one of them, from Osiris to the latest of his Syrian and Greek progeny, in the faith which goes by the name of Christ, to the dishonour of that holy name.

To this spot he came,—probably to see the flowing forth of Jordan from the rock. In gazing at that, he must have seen these niches, and the inscriptions which show in whose honour they were made. What a singular and most interesting union of ideas this is! It rouses our minds to read of Paul at Athens,—and our classical and religious associations are curiously blended when we read his address uttered before the altar,—that most venerable altar,—of the Unknown God. But what is that to this! Here came Jesus, to the shrines of Pan and the Nymphs, and had their statues probably, and certainly their sculptured shells and glorifying inscriptions, before his eyes. No place could be a fitter one in which to speak privately to his followers of his Messiahship and his approaching kingdom, and in which to distinguish by extraordinary promises the follower who, being the first to acknowledge his Messiahship, was selected by him to be the main support of his anticipated empire.

The springs over which Pan and the nymphs held special watch were usually beautiful, in themselves or in their environs. And if the waters here did ever really flow out of the cave itself, nothing could well be more striking. They are generally represented as gushing from the cave ; and even Burckhardt, the most reliable of reporters, says, “the largest niche is above a spacious cavern, under which the river rises.” As it certainly rose at the foot of the rock, and was first seen issuing from the stones, and not from the cavern at all, when we were there, it is satisfactory to find that Seetzen says, “the copious source of the river of Panias rises *near* a remarkable grotto in the rock,” &c. &c. I cannot understand how so many authorities can assign the more picturesque origin to this spring, when the cave was certainly perfectly dry when we visited it, and the stream flowed forth in a different direction, and at a distance of several yards. This cannot, I imagine, be a variable circumstance, on which travellers might differ without being wrong, as in the case of the qualities of the water of the Dead Sea, and other instances.

The later faith which has transcended all preceding religions in its power over the human race,—the Mohammedan, which has won its tens of thousands to the thousands of any other faith well known to us,—is not without its representative here. Towering above the shrines of the Greek deities, and the source of the sacred Hebrew river, and the site of the palace of the Cæsars, and the fields where Jesus walked, is the great Saracenic castle, held for ages in the name of Allah and Mohammed his Prophet. We saw it long, this

day, as we were riding over the boundary hills of Palestine.

These were our last hours in the Holy Land. From these heights, we looked back upon a land of most variegated scenery ; and, I could not but feel, of faiths curiously commingled, strong as was the Jewish profession of unity of faith and of race. The main feature of its faith, however, its monotheism, finally remained unchanged for so long as to serve as a basis for its distinctive character before the world. Though allegorically impaired by the Pharisaic sect before the time of Christ, and by the Alexandrian and other Christian parties ever since, that great doctrine has remained, on the whole, practically established : and this it is which distinguishes this birthplace of a religious faith above perhaps every other on earth. Next to this ranks the distinction given it by the appearance of Christ. When men shall have learned to receive his doctrine in the simplicity with which he gave it,—to receive it from himself, from his life and his words,—they will probably become aware that it is its commixture with superstitions and institutions older than itself which is the cause of its not having been more extensive and effectual in its operation than the history of eighteen centuries shows it to have been.—Encumbered with much that was never contemplated by the Teacher himself, and that is incompatible with the whole spirit of his gospel ;—encumbered with a priesthood and ritual of its own, and adulterated with more or fewer of the superstitions of all the nations who ministered to the Hebrew mind, it is no wonder that the true doctrine of Christ is overlaid and almost

destroyed. The Paternity of God, extending to all men; the infallible operation of His Will or Providence; His strict Moral Government, by which moral retribution is inevitable; the brotherhood of the whole human race, and in that the promise of peace on earth and goodwill towards men:—and the establishment of a spiritual kingdom on earth, of which he should be Prince and his followers the administrators, the dead rising to enter into it, and the living to be admitted without death:—the expiration of the Jewish Law on the establishment of this kingdom, and the spiritual nature of the new religion, which was to have the heaven and the earth for its temple, and the whole body of believers for its priests;—these were the points of faith which appear to have been offered by Jesus himself;—the simple Glad Tidings which the earnest disciple hears from him when listening to his voice alone in the retirements of Palestine, sequestered from the embarrassing echoes of other countries and later times.—It was thus that Palestine and its Faith appeared to one, at least, as I looked back this day, from the ridge of the eastern hills, for the last time upon the Valley of the Jordan.

PART IV.

SYRIA AND ITS FAITH.

"Thus in the faiths old Heathendom that shook
Were different powers of strife.
Mohammed's truth lay in a holy Book,
Christ's in a sacred Life."

Milnes. Palm Leaves.

"Call it not false : look not at the falsehood of it ; look at the truth of it. For these twelve centuries it (Mohammedanism) has been the religion and life guidance of the fifth part of the whole kindred of mankind. Above all, it has been a religion heartily *believed*." *Carlyle. Hero Worship*, p. 123.

"It is the promise of Christ to make us all one flock ; but how and when this union shall be, is as obscure to me as the last day. Of those four members of religion" (Pagans, Jews, Christians, and Mohammedans) "we hold a slender proportion. There are, I confess, some new additions, yet small to those which accrue to our adversaries, and those only drawn from the revolt of Pagans, men but of negative impieties, and such as deny Christ, but because they never heard of him. But the religion of the Jew is expressly against the Christian, and the Mohammedan against both."

Sir Thomas Browne. Religio Medici.

"I am pleased with contemplations which trace Piety to so pure and noble a source ; which show that good men have not been able to differ so much from each other as they imagined ; that amidst all the deviations of the understanding, the beneficent necessity of their nature keeps alive the same sacred feelings."

Sir James Mackintosh. Life, II. p. 123.

SYRIA AND ITS FAITH.

CHAPTER I.

ENTRANCE UPON THE HIGH LANDS OF SYRIA.—NIM-ROD'S TOMB.—FIELD OF DAMASCUS.—DAMASCUS AND ENVIRONS.—SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF MOHAMMEDANISM.—DAMASCUS AS A RESIDENCE.

THE ridge which hid Palestine from us was soon passed; and in the same moment we found ourselves in a new country, with new thoughts, and among a new people. On the shrubby hills which we passed over, under the protection of the towering Djebel Sheikh, we found blackthorn in blossom, just as it might be in England on the same day (April 24th). We rode not far beneath the snow, when we had reached a height equivalent to three-fourths of the height of the Anti-libanus range, which we had on our left hand: and for some miles we passed among volcanic *débris*,—among heaps of lava, and hillocks of burnt stones, black and dreary. In the midst of these, in a grassy meadow, lay a brimming pond, so perfectly round that the geologist of the party pointed it out as probably the crater of an extinct volcano.—Then there were upland

plains,—large table lands, half covered with flocks, showing that we had fairly entered upon the pastoral districts of the East. The towns and villages did not crown the eminences, or nestle in the valleys, as in Palestine; but were planted on the sides of the mountain, or in its recesses, on shelves of rock. One or two of them were exactly like a set of book-shelves, with houses for volumes; and their gardens below were on a slope so steep that, if it had not bulged, it is inconceivable how the soil could be retained.—The houses were no longer of stone, hewn or irregular, but of mud,—so smoothly plastered, and so carefully squared in form, as to carry back our thoughts to Nubia,—these being exactly like those neat African huts, except that they had no pyramidal inclination.—The sound of waters was all about us. Instead of the still pools and gentle springs of Palestine, we had here a rush of waters on every hand. Artificial watercourses were above us on the left hand, and below us on the right: our path was often flooded where the mountain streams burst, or overflowed their channels; and more than one of the villages seemed almost made up of mills. Almost the only feature which was like Palestine was the caves of the limestone rocks, with their wrought entrances. After we left the black volcanic *débris*, we came upon fantastic white limestone hills, which gave a curious yellow tint to the landscape when they formed the foreground to the snows of Djebel Sheikh.

As for the people,—the herdsmen on these upland plains were much like Arab herdsmen everywhere: but among the first people we met were two Druse women. · The horn looked less monstrous than I had

expected: and these women were so handsomely dressed, and looked so well, with their gold ornaments, down each side of the face under the veil, that the impression made on us by the first Druse women we had seen was very favourable. Two pretty children were with them, who returned my salutation with much grace. I used to salute (by touching the forehead and breast) all the grey-haired people I met in these mountains; and all the children, and most others; and my salutation was, without a single exception, returned. It certainly pleased, rather than displeased the people; and it gave me a good opportunity of seeing their faces. The horn appears to be the point of honour with the Druse woman, as the beard is that of the Eastern man. When the bride assumes the horn, and hangs the veil over it, she presents her husband with a dagger, and desires him to kill her if she proves unfaithful. The Druse woman rarely does prove unfaithful: but, in such a case, the husband returns her horn to her family, without explanation; and they know that the dagger has done its work, and that the wife will be heard of no more.

As for the new thoughts that we plunged into, when we had passed that ridge, they were such as, I suppose, occur naturally in this extraordinary country, where the diversity of faiths is greater than in any land which the English traveller enters. In Egypt, there was but one faith, during the ages on which our attention was fixed throughout our Nile voyage. The Greeks and others derived gods from Egypt, but never added one to the Egyptian pantheon. In the Sinai peninsula, we were concerned with only one; for there

also, our interests were altogether in the past. In Palestine, we found the meeting point of all the faiths of the ancient world :—the reservoir into which flowed streams from all the heights of human thought ; and we saw how, from this reservoir, one came to send forth among men purer waters of life than had ever hitherto been dispensed. This gave a distinctiveness to Palestine, among the homes of the Faiths, greater than Egypt or Sinai could claim, in as much as the latest of these faiths was more fit for universal adoption in the course of ages. Whether all were derived from some primitive Ideas, we know not ; nor can ever know but by new light being cast on early Egyptian history. That none were found to suffice is proved by each having issued in some other : but each marks its own region of the East as the birthplace of one of the leading faiths of the world. We had now entered a country where no leading faith had its origin, but where all are found at this day, existing in vigour, but in conflict : and I, for one, had my mind eagerly awake to observe their operation. There was no more repose now, as for some weeks past, on a familiar faith, whose origin and progress we could trace from hill to hill, by valley, lake and river along our road. We could no more trace the simple Christianity of Christ himself, in visiting his haunts, but were entering upon the scene of an extraordinary congress of Deities, brought together, not to form a pantheon, but by the accidents of time, and the unsatisfied needs of human nature.

We began at the earliest date. Our resting-place, this first night in the Damascene territory, was at

Nimrod's Tomb. The very name carried us back further in the world's history than our imaginations had travelled since we left Egypt. It is true, the Jews hold traditions of Nimrod which would make him live no longer ago than Abraham. They say that Nimrod cast Abraham into the fire for not worshipping the Sun; but that Jchovah forbade the flames to touch him, and brought him into Canaan. But other traditions represent Nimrod as seceding from the company who built Babel, in disgust at their immoralities. This would make him much older than Abraham. At all events, in the traditions of Nimrod, and in the remains of the ancient pyramidal fire altars which are scattered about the country, we have traces of the earliest worship known to have been practised here. And this worship is believed to exist still, in certain recesses of the Lebanon. The worship of the Sun, as direct and unmixed as it ever was at Baalbec or at Samaria in Jezebel's days, is believed to be practised at this hour in some retired places of the land we were now entering upon.—Then, there is the old Egyptian method, with a good deal of its doctrine, existing among the Druses. It is very difficult to ascertain what their faith and worship are, because they have Mysteries, like the men of old; and these Mysteries are as well concealed as of old. Some suppose them to bear about the same relation to the Mohammedans as the Samaritans did to the Jews: and there may be among them about as much of Egyptian philosophy and faith mixed with their Mohammedanism as the Samaritans had of Assyrian faith and worship incorporated with their Judaism. Their incarnate Messiah, Hakim, (to whom

there is an inscription in a mosque at Cairo as the Supreme God) may contain some Jewish and some Christian elements : but the division of castes, and the practices of their Mysteries among the Druses remind one strongly of the old Egyptians :—and yet the Druses are an offset from Mohammedanism.—There are Jews,—a very few,—much like what the oriental Jews of these days usually are.—Then there are Christians of many sorts ; and all so unlike anything that the biographers of Christ could have conceived of, that, but for the lights of history, it would be a wonder how they ever came by the name. Besides the ordinary Greek and Latin Christians, Armenians and Nestorians, there are the Maronites ; a curious kind of Christians who, at one and the same time, practise monachism to an extraordinary extent, and preserve the old oriental Law of Revenge. They read the Psalter, and two or three puzzling books on Divinity,—Thomas Aquinas being their favourite author ; and, for the rest, though they are in communion with Rome, they are nearly independent in their proceedings under their own patriarch, and present as barbarous a phase of Christianity as can anywhere be found.—Outnumbering all these religious bodies together are, of course, the Mohammedans,—the most interesting offset from Christianity that has yet been seen : not only from the derivation and history of the faith, but because its prevalence,—wider than that of any other faith, (—or any other familiarly known to us,—) shows what must be its adaptation to human nature, and, in that, how indispensable must be its appearance in the history of Man.—Here is a diversity of faiths, in this region

which has originated none! Instead of an influx of thought from various regions, issuing in a fresh and invigorating faith, we have here a cluster of religious sects, none communicating with any others, and none therefore deriving life from any new source. From the worship of Baal and Astarte to the ritual of Mohammed, all exists still: and we have only to rejoice that a religion so good, in comparison with the rest, as that of Mohammed, prevails over the others to the extent that it does.

This latest and most prevalent faith seemed almost too modern to be attended to this first day when, with every advance into the recesses of this awful old mountain region,—this Antilibanus, of which we used to read in our childhood almost as of the world before the flood, we seemed to be stepping over into the remote ages. Ascending from one table-land to another, we came out, late in the afternoon, upon very high ground, where the soil was wet, the crops poor, the wind very cold, and the inclosing mountains dim and dreary with haze and snow. As I repeatedly turned my horse to look behind me and to the left, the impression of what I saw was very awe-striking. Djebel Sheikh, whose snowy summit had appeared sky-high all the way from the further verge of the Plain of Esdraëlon, now seemed to have subsided to a common hill; so did the chain rise and swell as it retired north-eastward. Shrouded and ghost-like, the mountains closed us in: and as I gazed at them, I longed to look into their hidden vallies and recesses, to see how human faith was faring: —to see the shrines of Baal, and the smoke of his altars among the rocks; to hear from some platform

on the heights, the bell of the Maronite Convent chapel :—to look in upon the vigils of the Druses, as their initiated class, the Intelligents, held the Mysteries ; and to see, in some Mohammedan village on the uplands, the pious families already in preparation for joining the next caravan, when it should set forth from Damascus for Mekkeh. The mountain chains of the earth retain in every way their conservative function. If they preserve untouched and unwasted their masses of mineral wealth, their treasure of gems, their accumulated snows, and the unsunned sources of all rivers, not less do they harbour and guard the characteristics of the tribes of men, and their confiding deposits of their respective faiths.

We stopped on a ridge, misty and cold, where there is a poor hamlet beside Nimrod's Tomb. The great Hunter, said to be the first of men who was made a king and wore a crown, is declared to be still lying under some stones, about three hundred yards from our tents. This is doubtless quite as true as that a building close at hand, whose ruined walls are composed of very large stones, is Nimrod's Castle. It appears that the tradition about the tomb is really old ; and that ruins which have lost their names are all called after the tomb.—This hamlet is Kferhoura. Its situation is bleak ; but there are two little fertile dells on either side of the ridge ; and the people seemed to be tilling their fields with care and success. The evening was so cold that we should have been glad of a fire in our tent : but there was no more charcoal left than would be wanted to boil the kettle in the morning. All night, the wind was high ; and the servants were kept from their rest,

knocking in the tent-pegs, that our whole establishment might not fly away.

On the 3rd of December, it had been proposed, on board our Nile boat, and agreed to *nem. con.* that we should go to Damascus. And now, on the morning of the 25th of April, we were within a few miles of it. Nothing could be less like our notions of Damascus and its climate than the spot we were on. It was far more like Westmoreland in March ; and my heart warmed to it for that reason, in spite of the cold gusts, which brought mists and flying showers upon us from the mountains. Mrs. Y. and I sat under a rock and an umbrella, reading about the Druses, while the tents were struck :—quite a new piece of oriental experience ! There was, however, such a rainbow as I suppose was never seen in Westmoreland,—first inclosing a group of mountains, and then confounding their outlines with its colours.—We descended considerably to the Field of Damascus,—the plain amidst which the city is placed : but still it was evident that this plain itself is high ground, in comparison with the Valley of the Jordan. The wind was so strong, and blew so incessantly, that we could not have travelled at all, if it had not been in our backs.

This Field of Damascus is very striking ;—a plain of yellowish soil, scantily tilled, or, at least, showing to-day very scanty crops ; with bushes and low trees sprinkled here and there, and many streams crossing the track ; and the whole plain closed in by many-tinted mountains, of which Lebanon is the crown. Far away, at three hours' journey from the hills we descended, a black stripe lay straight across the plain,

which, as we approached, assumed more and more the appearance of what it really was, a “verdurous wall of Paradise.” Above the great mass of verdure, sprang the loftiest poplars I ever saw; and when we came within a few miles, the pale minarets appeared above the woods, in rivalry with the dark poplars. Embosomed in these woods lies Damascus.

On our way, we saw the Mirage in great perfection. If I had not known what the plain really contained, I should have been completely deceived: and, as it was, I was perplexed about what was real and what mere semblance. Before us was a wide gleaming lake, with wooded shores. It was these shores that perplexed me; for I could allow for the water. As we approached, the vision flaked away, and formed again behind us; only, the waters behind looked grey and dark, whereas they were gleamy when in front. The woods on the shore resolved themselves into scrubby bushes,—the hiding places, one might suppose, of naughty little mocking elves. There is something unpleasant and disheartening in the sensation of the dissolution of a vivid mirage, even when one is not in want of water and shade. It gives one a strange impression that one must be ill: and when this is added to the real suffering of the wayfarer in the Desert, the misery must be cruel.

After riding three hours over this plain, and approaching the line of verdure so near as to see yellow walls and towers within the screen, Giuseppe told me we were at Damascus. I was rather disappointed; for I had read of the thirty miles of verdure and woods amidst which the city stands, and I had expected much

from the ride among the trees.—The walls turned out to be those of a village; and I soon discovered that Giuseppe called the woods Damascus, as well as the city. We rode on still for two hours, along green tracks, past gravel pits and verdant hollows, round villages, through cemeteries, under the shade of glorious groves! It is truly a paradise. The fields and orchards are one;—a thing I never saw elsewhere. Out of thick crops of wheat and barley and beans rise fruit and forest trees, which do not seem to injure the vegetation below with their shade. The abundant growth of the walnut exceeds that of any one tree I ever saw, unless it be the apple in the United States. We found that, besides exporting a great quantity of walnuts, a large proportion of the people make them their chief food, eating them as the Spaniards do chesnuts.—I saw a vine hanging out its young leaves and tendrils from a walnut, at least thirty feet from the ground. The citron perfumes the air for many miles round the city: and the fig trees are of vast size. The pomegranate and orange grow in thickets. There is the trickling of water on every hand. Wherever you go, there is a trotting brook, or a full and silent stream beside the track: and you have frequently to cross from one vivid green meadow to another, by fording, or by little bridges. These streams are all from the river beloved by Naaman of old. He might well ask whether the Jordan was better than Pharpar and Abana, the rivers of Damascus. These streams, the old Pharpar and Abana, join a little way from the city, and are called the Barrada. The waters are carried in innumerable channels over the whole field of verdure; then they

again unite in a single stream, which is lost in a lake or swamp called the Lake of the Meadow.

It was not easy to mistake the city walls when at last we came to them. They are rather high, but not so as entirely to exclude the view of the cupolas and minarets within. There are many towers upon the walls; but they are, for the most part, decapitated. We rode round at least half the city, as we were to enter by the eastern gate. It was something to remember that this is the oldest known city in the world. Abraham's steward came from Damascus, the man and the city being mentioned in Genesis, XV. 2. From its beauty and value, it has in all ages been an object of contention; but whenever shattered by sieges and foes, it has risen again; and here it is still, one of the gems of the earth. By this, no one means that its beauty is in its streets. Nothing can well be more ugly than they are, with their long lines of black yellow walls, unbroken but by a low ordinary door, here and there:—and the pavement is bad; though not so execrable as that of Jerusalem. There are few edifices which can be favourably seen within the walls: so that the charm of Damascus is not of that kind which we usually mean when we praise a city for beauty. The interior of its best houses is exquisite; and the bazaars are finer than those of Cairo, and, as I am told, than those of Constantinople. But the glory of El Sham, (as the Arabs call this beloved city of theirs,) is in its position, which truly warrants all the raptures of all ages, from the time when Abraham made Eliezer of Damascus his steward, till now.

Adjoining the gate by which we entered is a walled-

up portal, with two arches, now filled with masonry. This is the gate by which Paul entered Damascus: and the street by which we went from this entrance to our hotel, without a turn to the right or the left, is still called "Straight." In a street to the right of this, as you enter the city, is shown the house which is pretended to be that of Ananias; and in a niche of a chamber therein is the apostle said to have received his sight.—In the city wall is shown the aperture through which he was let down in a basket: and there is a tomb in the cemetery outside the eastern gate, which was pointed out to us as that of Gorgias, the soldier who, according to tradition, connived at Paul's escape, and was martyred for it.

As we rode through the long street to our hotel, we saw the people busy in bazaars which looked light and airy. They were selling fruit and vegetables, making clothes, and a large quantity of baskets. The people were everywhere civil to us. We should have looked for this civility as belonging to the manners of a capital city, but that the Mohammedans of Damascus have a character for savage and cruel bigotry, which certainly seems justified by their occasional persecutions of the Jews;—persecutions unequalled in barbarity in our times.—On arriving at the Italian hotel, we met two of our Desert comrades; and one of them kindly gave up his apartment to Mrs. Y. and me, as he was to depart the next day. This Italian hotel has been much vaunted by some visitors to Damascus; and it was ludicrous to read on the spot the descriptions with which English readers have been supplied of the court-yard and apartments of this hotel. As for the court-yard,

we saw no inlaid marbles, mosaic pavements, jets of murmuring fountains, gold fish, and fragrant orange trees: but instead of these, we found rude stone pavements, plaster walls daubed with red and blue: a deewán somewhat repulsive in aspect, and two or three fig-trees, and some pinks coming into flower about the tank. As for the apartments, that which was in kindness given up to us in exchange for a worse, was so perilously damp, and infested with beetles, that we refused to sleep in it a second night: and five snails were found in their slime under one of the beds. It is not right in travellers to romance about such houses as these, whether they be in the East or elsewhere; for future comers suffer by the complacency or indolence of the proprietor, thus induced. By remonstrance, we obtained better chambers: but the table is not to be praised: and there is no reason why it should not be good in a place so amply supplied with provisions as Damascus.

We saw more of the bazaars at Damascus than in any other city of our travels; the whole party having to make purchases for friends at home. The goldsmiths' bazaar was one of the most interesting;—not from the quality of the jewellery, but from the picturesque figures of the workers, bending their turbaned heads over the blow-pipes, in their little dim shops.—The alleys where galloon-weaving and silk-chain making, and the manufacture of slippers were carried on were very attractive, from the number of children employed. The little boys, weaving and shoemaking, were extremely industrious. They appeared to put their “Arab intensity” into their work, young as they were.

Sometimes, in curious contrast, a dealer of graver years would be seen fast asleep in the next shop, his head laid back on a comfortable pillow of goods, and his whole stock open to the attacks of any one who chose to steal.—The prettiest sight in connection with the bazaars was when a net was drawn over the front of the shop, to indicate that the owner was at prayers. Of course, theft would be perfectly easy during such an interval: but we were assured that it never happens: and purchasers wait, without any repining, for the re-appearance of the pious tradesman.

I was altogether disappointed in the silk goods of Damascus. I saw very few articles that I thought pretty, more or less, though the fabric was substantial enough. There was a vulgarity about the patterns,—especially about those which were the most costly,—which perplexed me till I learned the secret. The famous old Damascus patterns, the inheritance of centuries, and of which every Damascene is proud, have been imitated by our Manchester manufacturers, so as to become quite familiar to English eyes. The effect of this in Damascus is curious. The inhabitants import our cotton goods largely: and when they see their own patterns again, the gentlemen think they look as well as their own heavy silks; and they make their wives wear them instead,—greatly to the discontent of the ladies. The saving to the Damascene husbands is very great; as indeed it must be, if we consider the cost of dressing a dozen women in one house,—wives and handmaids,—in such costly articles as the heavy silks of Damascus.—For my own part, I would rather wear Manchester cottons. The dresses of Damascus silk

have no variety, and the scarves are stiff and cumbrous.—Perfumes are sold, very largely. Some of our party bought attar-of-roses and a decoction of sandal-wood, which however presently lost its scent.—The gentlemen looked at daggers and scimitars: but the blades of Damascus are not what they were; and I believe there was nothing very noticeable about these arms.

By the kindness of a resident who, as a physician, has freer access to families than any other gentleman could obtain, we saw the interiors of several handsome houses. They were truly beautiful,—with their marble courts, fountains, thickets of orange plants and other shrubs, and their lofty, cool, luxurious apartments.—In the house of a wealthy Christian gentleman, we saw several ladies, some Jewesses being on a visit at the same time. The dress of these Jewesses was superb. In addition to the coloured muslins, gold embroidery and handsome shawls round the waist, which all the ladies had, these Jewesses wore a profusion of diamonds. Their heads were entirely covered with natural flowers and clusters of diamonds, inserted in a close-fitting silk net. The painting of the eyes is somewhat deforming, as unnatural arts always are: but it is less hideous than the painting of the eyebrows. By association of ideas, a junction of the eyebrows gives to us an impression of intense thought: and nothing can be more disagreeably absurd than to see this artificial thoughtful frown on the excessively silly and inane face of an Eastern woman. They pull out the hair of their eyebrows, and paint a dark stripe straight across.—Their health is bad, of course, as they have no exercise but

shuffling over their marble pavements in splendid patters. Their English physician has carried one important point in inducing some families to go annually for change to distant villages, where before they never went but on occasions of serious illness.

In one house that we visited, the eldest daughter, always jovial, and now not the less so for having been recently divorced, sat down beside me, and laughed with the delight of having visitors. She examined my clothes, stroking me and nodding; but fixed at last upon my gloves. After trying long and in vain to put them upon her enormous hands, she took my hands, to stroke them and laugh at the nails. She wanted me to admire hers, which were all dyed black; but they were too much as if they had all been pinched in the door. How all sympathy and sorrow about this lady's divorce evaporated during such intercourse, I need not say.—We saw several times the celebrated Esther, the Jewess, and her lover;—the pair who are ever anxiously supposing that our House of Lords is occupied in granting the lady a divorce from her insane husband. Esther's case is really a hard one. While she sees divorces going on all round her, whenever desired, she cannot be set free from her insane husband, because she happens to be a British subject. Some kind hearted but injudicious English travellers, who were really interested in Esther's case, led her to expect a decree of divorce from England; and she and her lover, who would not interest us on any other account whatever, are constantly in expectation of being able to marry. Esther has been written of as the beautiful Jewess of Damascus. I suppose

she would generally be considered handsome : but I saw several faces which pleased me more.

The British Vice-Consul invited us to dinner ; and gave us a spectacle which we shall long remember. He invited the Jewish ladies I have mentioned, and some others ; and several native Christian ladies, whose dress and manners are, for the most part, like those of their Mohammedan neighbours, except that they are not shut up in the hareem. The native wife of the French Consul was also there ; and the gentleman and lady of the American Mission ; and many besides. —The Vice-Consul and the physician I have mentioned live together ; and they have one of the best houses in Damascus : and therefore, one of the most beautiful, for its size, in the world. At dinner, there were four guests besides our own party. The table was covered, very elegantly, with flowers and the dessert ; and the dinner was handed round. A band of Turkish musicians was in one corner of the apartment : but they played so excessively loud that they were presently sent to amuse the native ladies, who were arriving, and awaiting us in the alcove of the court.

Our hosts had promised that we should see the celebrated sword-dance performed by their guests : and this was the great object of the evening, though it was no small advantage to see a party of Damascene gentry assembled in this manner. When we adjourned from the dining room to the alcove, we found the deewáns occupied by long rows of ladies, dressed in the extraordinary style of which our gentlemen friends had seen less than we had. Some gentlemen who

are not easily disconcerted, looked very awkward and shy when seated in a long row, on chairs and stools, immediately opposite the array of eastern belles. These ladies whispered to each other, laughed and looked about them. Esther and her lover giggled and flirted in a corner. The American lady went about with cheerful courtesy from one to another: and our hosts were everywhere. Still, all was so dull that I began anxiously to hope for the sword-dance. Time went on, and we heard nothing of it. A tray was brought, and set down in the middle of the alcove, with cucumbers, fruits, wine and arrack,—excessively strong. Some of the ladies took up each a cucumber, and ate it, rind and all, swallowing after it some arrack, to promote its digestion. I am assured that ladies will sometimes eat three cucumbers in succession, in this way, with a glass of arrack to each.—A pause followed, broken only by a gust of wind which blew out some of the candles, and brought a few drops of rain, which sent us into the house. Then I supposed we were to have the sword-dance: but one of my companions told me privately that it was not to take place, and advised me to ask no explanation at present.

In the fine apartment we had entered, there was a repetition of the scene in the alcove:—music, whispering and giggling; cucumbers and arrack:—there were also excellent coffee and ice creams for us Europeans. In about another hour, the native ladies left their seats, crowded together, drew their veils about them, and departed: and we went away with the last of them.—When we reached home, I found there had been a scene behind the curtain, and that it was very well that

the evening had passed off so quietly as it did. As far as we could understand the matter,—but it was never quite clear to us,—the case was this. During the dreadful persecution of the Jews at Damascus, a few years since, the French Consul was believed to have been their enemy, and to have aggravated their sufferings. When the Jewish ladies found his lady this evening at the Consul's, they and their Christian friends were hurrying away again, in great wrath, when our host the physician went to them, and remonstrated, telling them what a fatal insult their departure in this manner would be to their host, the Vice-Consul. On this representation, they consented to stay, but stipulated that they should not be asked to dance, or amuse themselves in any way.—The part of the story which we could not understand was why these women fell into such wrath against the French Consul's lady this particular evening, when we had seen them meet in a morning visit without any demonstrations of ill-will. There must be more in the matter than we comprehended, no doubt.

As for the persecution to which this story relates,—there is no part of the world,—or of the civilised world, at least,—where the traveller can go, without coming upon the traces of religious persecution. He finds it in Massachusetts and in England ; in Germany and Egypt; at Jerusalem and at Damascus. Nowhere can men leave other men free in regard to matters of Opinion. In countries like ours, where the laws forbid aggression on life, property and outward liberty, on account of matters of Opinion, it is common to say that there is no persecution : but it is no more possible in England

and Germany than it ever was in Spain or Italy, for men to hold the diversity of opinions which men were made to hold without being the worse for it, in reputation and peace of mind, if not in liberty and property. I am not speaking of this now as a matter of censure, but as a curious matter of fact. There could not be so universal a tendency to intolerance without some overwhelming reason for it :—some cause deep-seated in human nature, or stringently operative in human circumstances. Besides the causes which lie deep in human nature,—the need of sympathy, the love of repose upon convictions, the pride which is usually more or less implicated in our judgments, and the partial view which men inevitably take of every subject upon which their minds are not in suspense ;—besides all these causes of dislike to adverse opinions, there is, almost universally prevalent, an idea of danger, spiritual danger, incurred by the holding of any opinions but those which the parties respectively believe to be right. It is only a man here and there who knows, and acts upon the knowledge, that the greatest safety in the universe is in truth ; and that the most direct path to safety is in the pursuit of truth. And perhaps it is even more rare still to meet with one who sees that all genuine faith is,—other circumstances being the same,—of about equal value. The value is in the act of faith, more than in the object ; as is shown by the glorious men who have lived under every system of religious faith, and the bad men who have flourished equally under the worst and under what we are accustomed to consider the best.—Of course, it is of very high importance that the objects of faith should be the loftiest and

the purest that, in any particular age, can be attained. A noble-minded man cannot take up with a low superstition when a higher system of faith is open to him : or he will suffer spiritually if he does : but he may be as noble in the thorough devotion of his faculties to the highest abstraction of his time as a successor may be under a higher abstraction of a later time. His need and his prerogative are to exercise his highest faculties in faith and obedience, and to gratify the best part of his nature by the contemplation and attainment of "the beauty of holiness," whatever be the names which he and others give to the Ideas which are the guiding stars of his life. An Egyptian of 5000 years ago might attain as lofty a moral state by living in obedience to that highest conception to which he gave the name of Amun or Osiris, as a Jew of similar nature and powers who devoted himself to the same loftiest ideas under the name of Jehovah. And thus again, a Jew who was of too lofty a mind to live in a spirit of fear towards the "Jealous God" of whom his lower brethren conceived, might, in his spirit of faith and obedience, penetrate through the apparatus of sacrifices and a preceptive law, to as clear a view, and as hearty an allegiance to the Father of all men, as a Christian could reach in a subsequent age. The polytheism of Egypt was a low state of religion for the mass of men ; but it did not, and could not, preclude the spiritual elevation of individuals. The Mosaic Law and ritual were a low stage for the bulk of the Jewish people, in comparison with what has existed since ; but it did not preclude the utmost spiritual loftiness of individual men. The Christian religion, corrupted as it has been, has resem-

bled but too much a mythology of which Judaism would have been ashamed, and has fallen short of its purpose accordingly, in its operation on the masses of men: but no one will deny that there have been men belonging to the Church in its darkest times whom the purest times of Christianity might have owned. And so on, through all the faiths of mankind.—The case being so, men afflict themselves needlessly about one another's safety, as regards points of spiritual belief. We may and must wish, for the sake of men at large, that mankind should conceive of God as a Father rather than as a King; as just and merciful, rather than as jealous and vindictive: but it is not for us to mistrust any human brother, or suppose that his best powers may not work out his highest good without his ideas being exactly correspondent with our own.—Instead of this trust, however,—a trust which faith, love and humility alike require,—we assume that a belief which differs from our own must bring forth bad results, be the qualities of the holder what they may: and then we naturally proceed the one step further, and conclude that those bad results have been brought forth. The Jew would think Socrates an idolator; as the Athenians believed him, in the worst meaning of the term, an atheist. The Christian cannot make out the Jew to be either idolator or atheist; but he imputes to him a constant active hatred to Jesus, because he still looks for the Messiah to come. The Mohammedan, judging of Christianity by what he sees in the Greek and Latin churches, regards all Christians as idolators on the one hand and infidels on the other. He holds with a well-grounded zeal to the monotheism which he sees to be

lost from the Christianity that is before his eyes ; and to the spiritualism of his faith, which excludes a priesthood ; and by that exclusion, maintains its vital power. The hatred with which he regards the Christian is as virulent as might be expected from his imputing to him at once both kinds of error,—idolatry in worshipping three gods and a multitude of saints, and infidelity in denying the greatest and chief Prophet of God. “These damned Christian infidels” is the description of all of us who go to the East, from the Bishop of Jerusalem to the cabin-boy of a ship. As imputation follows prejudice in a natural course, the Jew believes that the Sun-worshippers of the Lebanon revel in obscene rites, and are in alliance with devils :—the Christian believes that the Jews crucify a child every Passion-week : and the Mohammedan believes that the Christian wantonly sports with damnation by reviling the Prophet, and rebels against God by upholding the doctrine of free-will,—being thus twice over an outcast through infidelity.—There was something painful, yet salutary, in witnessing in the East these mere exaggerations of our own ways of regarding one another at home. When we witnessed the vindictive wrath of the Jews against their usurping and tyrannical neighbours,—and when our monk-guide at Nazareth told us, in all earnestness, that the Jews had crucified a child in the Holy Week just passed,—and when we were insulted and reviled by the Faithful, and were in the very places where they lately tortured the Jews with torments too horrible to be written down, I took the lesson home, and devoutly resolved upon two things :—never to hold back from declaring what I believe to be the truth; and

never to assume as facts the worst results which may proceed from what I believe to be error. While we see so many men who fall below the quality of their professed faith, and, happily, so many also who rise far above it, it is surely wisest, in the first place, to judge men as little as possible, and, in the next, to judge of them, where we must, by their individual powers and qualities, and not by the philosophy of the faith they hold. This is only saying in other words that we are to know men by their fruits: but, long as this mode of judgment has been commended to mankind, we seem to need to be reminded of it as much as ever; as much perhaps in our English homes and associations as the Christians at Nazareth, and the Mohammedans at Damascus, who punish the Jews, not for anything they have actually done, but for what a hostile imagination and a logical course of reasoning indicate that they might have done.

The subordination of Christianity to Mohammedanism in the East is a curious spectacle, from its novelty, to travellers from a Christian country. It is impossible to quarrel with the fact on the spot;—not only because it is obviously absurd to quarrel with a fact of such magnitude and import, but because it is plain to every unprejudiced eye that the fact ought to be what it is. The Mohammedan not only knows that his faith includes a larger proportion of mankind than any other, so as to make even Christendom look insignificant beside it, but he reasonably regards Mohammedanism as the reformed faith which raises men above any elevation they could reach by Christianity. Seeing Christianity as he sees it, chiefly in the Greek church,

this belief is reasonable. He may well think it a great advance upon the religion of the Greek church for men to worship One God ;—a God really and truly One, without subterfuge, or those metaphysical multiplications which he knows to have constituted the idolatry of the East. He may well think it a great advance upon the worship of the Greek church to have no priesthood intruding between God and his Maker. He feels himself to be irrefragably right in his solution of the great difficulty which lies at the bottom of all theological differences,—or rather in his conclusion about the Existence of Evil;—for solution there is none: nor is there any indication that there ever can be. The Predestinarian doctrine of the Mohammedan is the strong point of his religion, as the necessarily imperfect adoption of the Free-will doctrine of the modern Christian church is its weak point.—With all this strength on the side of Mohammedanism, in contrast with the abased condition of Christianity in the East, it can be no wonder that the more modern faith prevails immeasurably in proportion to the more ancient and vilely-corrupted belief. Even to us of the western world, who must necessarily be insensible to its affinities with Eastern thought, and suitability to Eastern habits of feeling and of life, there is abundant reason apparent why Mohammedanism should have spread and taken root as widely and deeply as it has done. And to us of the western world it must be clearer than to the people of the East, why Mohammedanism cannot always endure, however long it may yet serve the needs of its believers.

The fatal imperfection of Mohammedanism appears to

be its supposing Law, made known by precept, to be as positive, that is, as fully revealed, in Morals as in physical Nature. In Mohammedanism, there is not the slightest conception of a religion of Principles. Fact and positive precept are all that Mohammedanism contemplates: and these are not enough for a religion which is to endure. The Prophet was honest and sound-minded in excluding miracles from his scheme. Marvels are too familiar in the East, too natural in their occurrence, to be needed as an evidence there: and the Prophet was as well aware as we are that even if they were an evidence of physical power of a preternatural order, they could not possibly be an evidence of truth of doctrine. The powers attributed to devils and false prophets has always decided this matter in the East. And Mohammed was honest and sound-minded in rejecting a priesthood, or any other intervention between men and God. This strong point he probably took from Christianity;—the Mohammedan traditions of Christianity relating to a time prior to the fatal institution of a priesthood. But Mohammed was no philosopher, any more than he was an impostor. He had the strongest and most definite notions of the duty and wisdom of absolute obedience to the immutable Will of God: but he had no idea of that will being communicated in any other way than by a collection of precepts, and by the unmistakeable language of events. Of the governing power of Principles, he never formed any conception. He never recognised them at all as guiding and governing powers;—as that voice of God which Christianity assumes them to be.—It may be true that “Arab intensity,”—the passionate nature of

the Orientals which makes them in so far children,—necessitated the offer of a preceptive religion: as the similar temperament of the Hebrews had before done in their case: but a religion appropriate to children can never be permanent and universal. It may last very long and spread very widely still,—wherever, and as long as, there are tribes of a childish cast or habit of mind in Asia and Africa: but it cannot serve the purposes of the whole race: and herein lies the inestimable superiority of Christianity;—of the Christianity of Jesus himself. The whole purpose and scope of his teaching was to imbue men with the spirit of faith and morals; to detach them from forms and preceptive guidance, and introduce them to the prerogative of their own reason, conscience, faith and affections. While Mohammedanism appealed but partially to the strength of the human soul,—to its courage, patience, and obedience, (being lax to its indolence, both intellectual and spiritual,) Christianity appealed to all its powers, and put it in its own charge,—setting all things, in earth and heaven, within its reach, on condition of the exertion of all its powers.—Mohammed gave endless instructions to men what to do. But He who so well knew what was in man, knew that men can do anything that they see: and Christianity therefore gives the light, instead of offering a hand to guide men through the dark. It gives the light, calling upon men to find, train, and exercise their powers of sight.

Most miserably however has Christianity surrendered this life-giving influence here, in the presence of Mohammedanism. We went to visit the Greek Patriarch and his chapel and new church. How

much more Christian do the mosques look in their simplicity, than these idolatrous Greek churches with their profane mythological pictures, and their multitudinous rites and observances!—In this church we saw a very fine carved screen, half of which is spoiled by gilding, which is to extend over the whole, when it is finished. The carving is very fine, and most elaborate: and yet the whole screen, extending completely across the church, costs only 120*l.* The Patriarch, a white-bearded man of seventy-eight, of the commonest aspect, was in a state of high delight, which he expressed with a very innocent glee, at the reception he had met with in his recent progress round his diocese. He told us that the people came out in crowds to carry him into their towns: a treatment very unlike that which he will ever meet with in Damascus, where the Mohammedans invent tortures for Jews. It is curious how the Predestinarians of the world have followed one another,—as here the Mohammedans have followed the Pharisees,—in punishing adverse opinion more severely than immoral conduct. Hence, no doubt, has arisen the bad character of the Mohammedans as spreading their religion by the sword. Their Prophet did not desire or contemplate this, but used only reason and persuasion during the greater part of his course, being driven to the use of the sword at last, after a duration of meekness and patience quite wonderful in an Arab of the Desert. The charge of proselyting by violence appears to Eastern travellers as misplaced in regard to the Prophet and his original faith as that of sensualism. One needs but to travel in Mohammedan countries to take a quite different view from the popular European

one of these matters. While it is true, and honourably true, of Mohammedanism, that it respects, more than any other religion, the natural instincts of man, it is no less true that it ordains much asceticism, and that it has ever operated as a check upon sensualism, rather than as a sanction to it. Under it, men are, as under every other religion, as various as they would be without it. There are devout ascetics, mystics, temperate men and profligates, as there are under all faiths, from Buddhism to Quakerism : but the operation of Mohammedanism is in favour of temperance,—place, time and circumstance of its institution being considered.

One of the most affecting sights to us in Damascus was that of the ancient Christian cathedral converted into a mosque. We could not enter it, but we daily looked into it from the bazaars. Its court was large, light and airy, adorned with Corinthian pillars, and with squares of marble mosaic. What more we saw of it was by climbing up to a house-top by ladders, to view what remains of its grand entrance. This remnant of early Christian zeal looks mournful enough. The rich pediment and pillars,—the pediment shattered, and three of the six pillars decapitated,—are hidden and almost lost among sordid Arab dwellings ; and the Christian is excluded from courts which were built and adorned by Christian hands.

There is a place, two miles from Damascus, which is visited by people of all the three faiths ;—Jobah, declared, and reasonably, to be the place indicated in Genesis, XIV. 15, as Hobah, whither Abraham went in pursuit of Lot, who had been carried away :—" unto Hobah, which is on the left side of Damascus." I own

that one chief interest of Damascus and its environs is in their undisputed antiquity. To the synagogue at Jobah, however, another interest pertains. It is believed by the Jews that the Law was preserved here when Titus besieged Jerusalem ; and there are now thirty-six copies of the Law there which are considered very valuable. On the floor of this synagogue is shown a space railed in, to commemorate a deed which we should all be glad to forget,—whether it be fact or mere imputation.* The spot is said (but no one believes it) to be that where Elisha anointed Hazael King of Syria.—We were next taken down, by four or five steps, to a very small grotto, where, as we were assured, Elijah was fed by ravens,—there having once been a window through which the birds could reach him.

The house of Naaman is shown : but our friends advised us not to go. It is converted into a Christian Leper Hospital ; and there is more useless pain in visiting it than the occasion is worth. Dr. T., the physician, told me that the lepers are chiefly scrofulous subjects ; and that damp and poor diet are the great disposing causes of leprosy. The disease is not found to be contagious, no instances being known of its affecting those who dress the sores of the patients. In the young, incipient leprosy may often be combated : but for adults, nothing can be done beyond alleviation. They suffer much and long, usually dying of tubercular or related diseases, at last. It certainly appears, however, that this is one of the diseases destined to die out under the spread of civilisation.

In the course of our rides, we were repeatedly

* 2 Kings, VIII. 7—15.

conducted by our hospitable friends to the Cafés in the environs, which are so celebrated wherever Damascus is heard of. How astonished our families at home would have been to see us in a magic glass at such seasons of refreshment! They would have seen us sitting under a trellise of vines, or round a reservoir, with a row of nargeelehs before us, and coffee and ices at hand:—a brook, containing the waters of the old Pharpar, flowing into the garden, among plots of vegetables and thickets of fruit-trees, whose boughs were bending and cracking with the weight of their produce. Twigs of a plum-tree, thickly studded with green fruit, were offered to us, to carry away; and the stem of my chibouque was one day embossed with fresh-gathered roses.—The Cafés within the city, where the people go to smoke and talk, are very inferior to those in the environs. They are too much trodden, and too town-like; and the wooden platforms are sordid. But all are blessed with running waters and the shade of trees; and all afford exquisite pictures of grouped figures to the eye of the passing stranger.

Our rides were always charming,—the green tracks winding among orchards and fields, coming out sometimes on a little green eminence, and sometimes on a meadow, or a bridge, or a reach of the river. The old trees, ponds, water-courses and grassy nooks were very English on the whole, but luxuriant beyond English imagination. One tree in the city,—a plane growing in the middle of a bazaar,—was measured by us, and found to be thirty-eight feet in the girth.—By far the finest of our rides was that which showed us the celebrated view of the city from above the suburb of the

Salaheeyeh. We rode for nearly an hour through narrow streets, and past many mosques, before we found ourselves outside the city. Then we ascended the hill-side, not as high as the grottoes, but above the cemetery : and thence, looking back, saw a picture which appeared as if it must melt away in its own beauty. It is this view which makes the Mohammedans declare Damascus to be the first of their four terrestrial parades. The rich yellow city, with its forty minarets, springs up from the midst of the glorious verdure which looks as thick as a forest for miles round. Verdure springs up within the city too ; and a village here, a mosque there, and then a bridge, or a reach of road or water, peeps out from amidst the surrounding wood ; so that the intermingling of city and forest is most tempting to the fancy, as well as delicious to the eye. Beyond the oasis lies the plain ; and beyond the yellow plain, the tinted hills on every side : their hues soft and repressed, as if to set off the brilliancy of the gem which lies in the midst. I never saw anything like this again ; —anything nearly so sweet and gay. We passed over the same spot in leaving the city ; but the morning light was not favourable to it : and it was not like the same scene.

Among the mosques which we visited in the course of this ride, was one which might have been, as we saw it, a painter's dream. Two soldiers were lounging in the weedy gateway. In the long grass within lay the sculptured ornaments of the dismantled chamber. A broken reservoir was in the midst, its waters brimming over the sides into the grass ; and a soft green light was cast over it by the pendulous, leafy fig-tree

above. A shattered column lay at hand, moist and garlanded with ferns.

Very unlike this was the Mosque of the Derweeshes, which we next visited. It must once have been handsome; but it has now all the sordidness of decay, without any of the grace of desartion. The lead is stripped off its many cupolas by the weather; and the colours are stained on the walls: but the surrounding buildings are made into a shabby sort of stables, in which live eleven Derweeshes. They drone and beg, and say prayers, and live in the style of our cattle. They cut up the courts with mean wooden palings, within which beans were growing in the undrained plots which are like ponds after rain.

The entrances to the city through the deep arches of the bazaars are very fine, when the shops are closed,—as they were this day. We paused within the shadow and quietness, and looked out upon the gay and busy life afar, and the minarets,—one cased with green tiles, and others yellow and white,—glittering in the sun.—During the eight days of our abode at Damascus, how many such pictures we saw! and how clear it was that such would daily delight the eye, if we were to pass there a lifetime of eighty years! Dr. T. likes living at Damascus, and encourages his countrymen to invest money in mulberry plantations in Syria, and establish their families there. Few will be tempted to do so, at the cost of forfeiting the privileges of law and government;—of living in entire dependence on the protection of the Consul, whose own position is always a precarious one. I would not live in Syria, on any inducement whatever: but that

English persons do live there, and like it, proves what the charm must be of the beauty of the country and its cities : for there is really nothing else :—neither law nor government, nor society, nor a healthy climate.—A physician is, as he ought to be, a privileged person everywhere : but there is little encouragement to any other vocation : for the richest proceeds of mulberry-growing may be swept away at any moment by political or social change. There is bodily luxury,—as much as can be enjoyed without health : and there is a perpetual feast of beauty to the eye. This is, I believe, all, except for those who go for patriotic or benevolent objects. Such objects, of course, create an all-sufficient happiness at Damascus, as everywhere else.

CHAPTER II.

AIN FIJJI.—ZEBDANY.—BAALBEC.—THE BEKAA.

ON our way out of Damascus, we passed the great military Hospital begun by Ibraheem Pasha, when he was master of the country. The works were stopped when he retired ; and now the stones are taken, one by one, from the unfinished walls, by any persons who find it convenient to use them. From place to place in Palestine and Syria, we came upon the deserted works of Ibraheem Pasha : and everywhere we found the people lamenting the substitution of Turkish for Egyptian rule. The Turks, it is true, like the lightness of their present taxation, which is pretty much what it pleases them to make it : and every body knows that the rulers of Egypt impose high taxes : but the religious toleration which existed under Ibraheem Pasha, and his many public works, cause him to be fervently regretted ; — chiefly by the Christians, but also by many others. If there is at present any government at all in the districts we passed through, it is difficult to discern : and of course, the precariousness of affairs is extreme.

We were to spend two nights on the road between Damascus and Baalbec ; and the first was to be at Ain Fijji,—five hours and a half from Damascus.—

We followed the course of the Barrada ; or rather, we kept its course in view, which it was easy to do, from the belt of verdure which fringed its channel. In contrast with the limestone hills around, this vegetation looked black. In the hollows of the hill-range, there were islands of verdure, with a minaret to each, a mill, and a few habitations peeping out above the wood ; miniature likenesses of Damascus, and only less beautiful than it. The prettiest of these settlements was Bassena. While we looked down upon the Barrada,—the life of the region, without which it would be a desert,—the snowy peaks which shut in the valley of the Jordan rose to the south-west, and the mountains of the Antilibanus range, which we were now about to cross, seemed to enlarge every moment.

There was, of course, a greater abundance of water as we approached the mountains : and, of course, the tokens of popular industry increased in proportion. There were fig orchards, well cleared and fenced, on the ridges of the nearer eminences ; and plantations of mulberries and vines below. Wherever we fell in with a watercourse, there were spreading trees, good crops, bridges, mills and rows of dwellings.—It was rather late in the afternoon when I, who was riding first, turned into a recess among the hills which I thought so far more beautiful than any spot we had ever encamped in, that I turned back to intreat that we might stop here. My companions were of my mind ; but the servants assured us that Ain Fijji, which was only half an hour off, was better in every respect. We agreed to go and see : and we could

return if we preferred this nook, of which I had scarcely a doubt when we left it. From a promontory of the mountain, a grassy level spread out,—little larger than would be required for our camp. The Barrada bounded this bit of turf, rushing in a semi-circle under a fine precipice. Nothing could be more delicious than the gush of the clear abundant waters under the rocks, which overhung the stream enough to cast a shadow upon it.—The way out of this nook was by a path so rugged and difficult that I suspected we should not return, however disappointed we might be in Ain Fiji. Nobody, however, was ever disappointed in Ain Fiji, or, I should think, will be, while its waters flow.

As we passed by the village, the people appeared very civil: and a man put himself at the head of our troop, to show us where to encamp. He led us past a glorious old ruin, and by a descending road, where we heard the gush of waters from below and behind the poplars which made a screen on our left hand. The guide presently pulled down enough of an orchard wall on the right to allow the horses and laden mules to enter, and told us we might encamp in the orchard.—From our platform we overlooked the junction of the Barrada and Fiji below; and we dined under leafy walnut and fig-trees, with blossoming pomegranates pushing in between, and the gush of waters for our music. A group of very handsome and well-behaved women and children stood looking at us, offering now and then some friendly attention. High mountains encompassed the whole scene, and the sunset light upon the eastern summits was gorgeous. The waters

of the Barrada had some of the whitish sulphureous tinge which is seen in the Jordan ; while the stream from Ain Fijji was almost as blue as the sky. The currents flowed along, side by side, without mingling at all, for some way from their junction.

I knew that one might trace the whole course of the Fijji without any great exertion. It is, in fact, called the shortest river in the world, being only one hundred yards in length. Yet it is an abundant river for that space. The natives, being unwilling to believe that this can be all of it, declare it to come underground from the Euphrates.—I went, however, to see for myself all that is really known about it. Never did I visit such a spring. It bursts, an abundant river, from cavernous rocks, faced with stone, and graced by a temple to the Nymphs, which crowns the precipice. I got down, by the help of detached blocks and the roots of trees, and peeped into the caverns where the waters were welling up in the deep shadow, and rushing out to the light. There were hewn stones lying in the river, and remains of a cornice upon the face of rock. Above these were, as I now saw, two temples, of massive structure. The lower one had been vaulted, with an arched portal opening to the river. Never was heathen temple more exquisitely placed. A tall fig-tree, and a group of young poplars were now growing up within the walls : and it was all shrouded in groves, so that it could hardly be seen except from below, while it commanded the rushing stream, and was lighted by glancing reflections from its waters. A villager came to me, and showed me, by intelligible signs, everything I could wish to know ; and he said nothing about baksheesh.

As I returned to the camp, I met in succession several women, leading their flocks of goats and kids ; and men with asses laden with wood ; one of them spinning with the distaff. They all gave me civil and cheerful greetings. We seemed to have got into a little paradise of good manners, as well as beauty.

In this sense of security, I crossed the river, the next morning, while our people were breaking up the camp, and followed a hill-path to a considerable height, whence I could overlook the whole basin, with its woods and hidden waters. I was surprised to see how high up the hills vegetation was carried,—there being olive-groves, and even mulberries on ledges of the mountain where I could hardly have supposed they would grow. When I afterwards saw the western side of Lebanon, I found how much higher still men will climb and fix their dwellings, when they obtain a return for their pains. When seeing such things, in a country where property is eminently precarious, it is strange and painful to think of the Irish, lounging and languishing beside seas full of fish, and wide spaces of uncultivated land. If they were set down, as these people are, empty-handed among the rocky slopes of Antilibanus, with nobody to look to for protection or aid, what would they do ? Would they lie down and die ? or would they, like these people, build themselves houses of stone or mud, and make coarse and rude tools of the wood and stone of the mountain, and prepare terraces on the bare uplands, and grow fruit and mulberry leaves for barter, and grain for their own food ? And what would not these Syrian peasants say of their good fortune, if they had at hand bays of the

sea swarming with fish, and large tracts of soil wanting nothing but labour to make it fruitful ? It was strange and painful to think of these things : but yet there was some encouragement, too. When I saw what could be done by a willing and laborious peasantry in such a district as this, it seemed impossible that Ireland should not easily support her people when a new generation sets to work in earnest, like the inhabitants of these Syrian mountains. As we rode away from Ain Fijji, the people about the camp attended us till we were fairly off on the road, and then offered us a blessing such as Christians rarely meet with from Mohammedans. They cried after us "God be with you !"

The bridge of El Souk, two hours from Ain Fijji, is in a beautiful pass, where the rocks approach so as to leave only a strip of green on either side of the Barrada. These rocks have not only holes, supposed to be sepulchral, but tablets or panels which, though uninscribed, tell a curious tale. Their presence here is a mystery. The little bridge lightly spans an emerald-green fall of the river ; and the tufts of shrubs along the grassy banks of the stream are beautiful. A conduit is cut in the rocks ; and it crosses the stream with the bridge. A local tradition declares this conduit to have been made by a woman : and the learned of course suggest that this woman may have been Zenobia.

We followed the Barrada to a beautiful waterfall, among the shrubs to the left of our track ; and then we withdrew a little, crossing a long stretch of table-land, and seeing the quiet and now lessening stream through all its windings up to Zebdany, near which it takes its rise.

Zebdany is halfway between Damascus and Baalbec : but for three miles before reaching it, it was difficult to believe we were not in England. I thought at least that this must be one of the districts where English capital, managed by English agents, is invested : but I could not learn that it was so,—such scenes of British enterprise lying further to the north. We entered upon lanes ;—home-like lanes, with ditches on either side, and hedges of blackthorn, elder, sycamore, brambles, hawthorn, nearly out, and briar roses. The gates were like ours : everything was like home (for the lanes were even muddy) except that there were vines and mulberries in the fields, where with us there would have been apples and hops. There was nothing tempting in the village. As in duty bound, we inquired, as ordered by preceding travellers, for Adam's tomb : and the people took us to the cemetery ! We climbed to the upper story of a house, to see some Syrian silkworms. They were in trays : very small as yet ; and as disagreeable as they are everywhere else. —Our tents had gone forward meantime : we rode after them, over hill-tracks, for three hours more, passing a village where the houses were built of loose stones, and no longer of mud ; and at length saw our tents pitched in a beautiful dell, beside a lively stream. There were few or no people near, but goatherds tending their immense flocks upon the hills.

We were now only a few hours distant from Baalbec, and on the next evening, (May 5th) we were to rest under the walls of the great Temple of the Sun. The first few miles of our ride in the morning were charming,—winding beside the streams, and over grassy

levels, and across fallow fields, till we entered upon a barer region of limestone hills,—the outer skirts of the Antilibanus range.—I believe travellers usually approach Baalbec from the south, by the Bekaa: and some say that that is the most imposing approach. We reached it by a lateral pass, from the south-east, looking down upon it from a considerable distance. Travellers always stand up for their own way of first approaching a great object,—knowing that to be very fine, and knowing no other: and I might say that, from what I saw of the aspect of Baalbec, the second day, from the Bekaa, I should think the descent upon it better, for a first view, than an approach on the same level. But there is no saying, as we can have but one first impression; and I will only declare that we were quite satisfied with our first view of Baalbec.

The Bekaa is the Valley, sometimes called Hollow Syria, lying between the Antilibanus range and the loftier Lebanon. It is watered by the Lietani river,—believed to be the ancient Leontes,—which rises a little above Baalbec, and flows in a nearly straight course, till it reaches the Mediterranean above the ancient Tyre. It was by this Hollow Way that the ancient armies used to march, whose expeditions so largely affected the fate of the Hebrews throughout their residence in Palestine. The Syrians were wont to march down this valley to their sieges of Samaria; and it was by this way that the Egyptians, landing at Tyre, came up against Damascus. This conspicuous and much-frequented valley was a fitting place for the great Temple of the Sun;—both for the honour of the god, and for the convenience of native and foreign

worshippers. The edifices of Baalbec are situated on one side of the valley, which is here about seven miles wide. They stand indeed near the base of the eastern mountains.

We had seen the Bekaa at intervals during the morning, when the hills on our left opened enough to disclose what was behind them. The aspect of the eastern declivities of Lebanon, on the other side of the valley, was very remarkable. The summits were streaked with snow; below which the heights were of the usual mountain colouring of grey, purple and green. Below, their skirts were too variegated and gaudy for beauty, the slopes being white,* shaded into scarlet and crimson, which ran into the softer tints above. The Bekaa looked dim and uniform, and as if it must be as sultry as the plain of the Jordan in summer.—We turned to the left at last, down upon the Bekaa, and came upon a sudden view of Baalbec below us,—its six gigantic columns standing up above the great mass of ruins. The trees were few and scattered, instead of being like the woods we had seen investing all the towns, from Damascus onwards.

Before going to our tents, which were pitched beside the Temple of the Sun, we turned a little southwards, to the quarries, whence the stone was drawn for these mighty edifices. The whole area of these quarries is very large and striking; but the great marvel of the place is the unremoved block, whose bulk exceeds that of any stones we saw in Egypt: and, I believe, that of any other known block in the world. According to Pococke, this stone measures sixty-eight feet in length,

* From whence the name is derived,—Lebanon signifying White.

nearly eighteen feet in width, and nearly fourteen in thickness. There are stones in one of the temple walls measuring each from sixty to sixty-three feet in length, and of proportionate breadth and thickness: and these are built into the wall at some height from the ground. It has been observed, however, that the ground within is higher than that without; and some have supposed,—under the great difficulty of accounting for the elevated position of such masses,—that they were brought on rollers over high ground, deposited in their places, and the earth then cut away from them. But this does not appear to lessen the difficulty where such masses lie one upon another: for we have only to choose between the two impossible tasks of lowering the under series, and bringing the higher up hill. In truth, we know nothing about it; and the dealings of the ancients with such masses is a thing quite beyond our comprehension now.

The children about our tents were beautiful. I sat down, and collected them round me, to see an orange divided, and then to eat it up; and it was amusing to perceive how like they were to children at home,—in the boldness of one,—the shyness of another, and the waggery of a third. While I was thinking so, a beautiful girl stood between her mother and me, looking from one to the other. She held by the hand a shy little brother who would have hidden himself and lost his bit of orange, if I had not kept it for him till he could be induced to come. His sister now, on obtaining a smile from her mother, came to me, and most gracefully kissed my hand. This was not like an English child. Whenever I have travelled abroad, I

have wished that we could, in the training of children, cease to interfere with natural language in the way we do. I am aware that there is much to be said on both sides of this really important question ; and no one can be further than I am from wishing to return to those demonstrations of feeling which belong essentially to a state of barbarism. One would not wish to hear the howl at funerals in England ; nor to see mourners tearing their clothes, or throwing dust on their heads, —any more than one would relish savage laughter and capering on joyful occasions. But the reason why one does not wish to see these barbarous signs of emotion is because violent emotions are themselves barbarous. The chastened emotions of the wise may be left to express themselves naturally : and their natural expression will be simply by the countenance and the tone of the voice. The natural language will be subdued only because the emotions are : and there appears no reason for the suppression of gesture and the training of the carriage, in relation to the small occasions of hourly life in which express discipline is out of place. English children are just as animated and graceful in their infancy as any little Arabs or Italians : but by ten years old they are subdued, if possible : and if they cannot be subdued, they are of course rude. In England, we see many a girl of the age of this Baalbec child, who is interesting from the mobile character of her countenance, in spite of her immovable attitudes. Why should she have been deprived of the freedom of unconsciously expressing herself by the language of gesture, during the years when she is too shy for the full use of speech, and before she has obtained adequate command

of it? The ungainly and unnatural inexpressiveness of childish manners in England is one of the most striking and uncomfortable impressions the traveller receives, on his return home; as the mobile grace of children and adults has been one of his daily pleasures abroad.

Almost before Mrs. Y. and I were dressed, our tent-curtains were thrown open, and a train of five ladies entered. As Alec was engaged interpreting between the gentlemen and some visitors in their tent, our position was rather awkward: or rather, it would have been so, if our visitors had not appeared extremely happy. They stroked our gowns, looked merrily in our faces, and every now and then, burst into a laugh, as children do from mere glee. Thus we sat some time, all looking as amiable as we could, till Alee arrived with coffee. These ladies were from Damascus,—sent hither by our friend, Dr. T., for health: and they reported very favourably of the effect of the change. One of them was the wife of the Baalbec agent of the English consulate. The agent and his lady were kind to us, sending us, the next morning, a tray covered with butter, cheese and fresh flowers. The agent also guided us in a ride in the neighbourhood; after which he sent a message to the gentlemen by Alee, requesting them to give him a spyglass.

After the departure of the ladies, we ran up to the great Temple, for half-an-hour before dinner; and afterwards we took a more deliberate survey. I will not dwell upon what has been well described in many books: but I am happy to be able to say that the report which I found prevailing when I reached home,

and saw repeated in many newspapers, of this temple being in course of destruction, that the stones might be used for a new quay, is altogether false. The date of the report was the same as that of our visit: and no persons were moving stones when we were there. Whenever they do, they will find it easier to help themselves from the enormous heaps that are lying about, than to dislodge the blocks of which the temple is built.

The edifices are most massive, wonderful and beautiful; and some of our party were more impressed by them than by anything we had seen. Fully admitting the reasonableness of this, I recurred to the temples of Egypt, and felt how much stronger was the charm of their antiquity than that of any architectural magnificence and grace. It is true, this place is of unknown antiquity; but that is historically, and not visibly. One remembers that this was a stage in the highway from Tyre to India when Palmyra was a mere watering station in the Desert: but what one hears of is its Greek name of Heliopolis; and what one sees is the buildings of the Roman emperors. I am quite of Captain Mangles' opinion when he says, "I think that he who has once seen Egypt, will never feel equally interested in any other country."

The six enormous columns which are seen for many miles round are the grandest feature of the ruins. The eagle is interesting, from being the true eagle of Sun-worship,—unlike the Roman, or any other emblematic eagle; and, to my eye, little resembling any actual bird. It is not easy to obtain a good view of it, as it is in an inconvenient position overhead;—and the block which

contains the greater part of it has sunk from its place, so as to divide the figure, and to threaten to fall on the head of the gazer.—The great hall has a classical air ; and its niches probably contained Roman idols. We wished the wall away which spoiled the corresponding recess, by being built directly across the area : but there was something striking in seeing within the same inclosure, traces of the three successive proprietorships ; —those of Baal-worshippers, the priests of Apollo, and the Saracens. It is impossible to give an idea how differently the worship of Baal appears among the ruins of his shrines and in the school-room at home. Amidst the contempt of idols in which we are brought up, it is a perpetual wonder how idols could have obtained any worshippers. Children in England,—and some grown children there,—lose all patience with the Hebrews that they could so much as turn their heads to look upon Baal and Astarte, and have no words for their contempt of people who, in the Promised Land, could “halt between two opinions.” They have a strong impression too of the vulgarity of Baal, who appears a much nobler deity when he is found to be the same with Apollo. I must confess that I felt almost as much affected with the sense of the folly of all this prejudice, when I stood among the ruins of Baalbec, as if I had just come out of the school-room in which I used to take upon me, thirty years ago, to despise Baal, and be disgusted with his vulgarity. Of course, I had long been aware, when I deliberately considered the matter, that this worship, like every other, prevailed, and could prevail, only in virtue of the Ideas in which it originated. But there is nothing like being

on the spot, for shaking off prejudice, and liberating one's sympathies. I had found this in Egypt, when I was instructed by what I saw to judge of its old faith as we would have Christianity judged of in a future age of the world ;—not by the literal outward representation alone, but with the remembrance that a whole world of ideas and feelings was living and moving within : and here, I received another lesson, in the magnificence and exquisite beauty which could have had no meaner origin than a spirit of reverence. In these mighty halls, under these lofty colonnades, there can be no doubt that hearts have beat, and souls have been stirred, with emotions as intense as human nature is capable of ;—of adoration and gratitude to the Lord of Life and the Light of the World. Baal was the most life-giving and beneficent of heathen deities ; and he was adored accordingly.

Nothing but earthquake could have effected such ruin as is seen here. All about us lay shafts and capitals ; and sculptured blocks shaken out of the ceiling of the portico : and when we climbed a shattered staircase belonging to the massive Saracenic portion of the buildings, we saw that we were surrounded by complete desolation. The light shone through the fissures in the temple-buildings ; and the whole area of Baalbec was an expanse of heaped stones, with two unfinished minarets and some modern dwellings rising out of them.

The large square called the Forum struck us as being very beautiful. Here, when this city was the glory of the plain between the two Lebanon ranges, did the people meet ;—the merchants trading between

India and Tyre ; the Egyptians on their way to Damascus ; the soldiers from Rome ; the artists and philosophers from Greece ; the ambassadors on their way to Palmyra, and the priests of the temple which towered close at hand. The edifice in the midst has left mere traces ; but the corner recesses of the inclosure, and the niches, with the Medusa-heads, the shells, and other such ornaments, tell something of the beauty which is gone.—The Saracenic fortress and vaults are wonderful places for size and solidity ; but of course, they do not constitute the interest of Baalbec.

Early the next morning, (May 6th) we walked to the little oratory in the Bekaa, about half an hour south from the Temple. It is merely a small roofless building, whose unadorned cornice is supported by eight granite pillars. The advantage of the walk was in giving us good views of the plain as we went, and of the ruins as we returned. The road was a mere track, passing among patches of tilled ground. In this path I saw, on returning, an oddly-shaped small stone ; and fortunately I stooped for it. When cleaned, it turned out to be a beautifully sculptured little hand, grasping a leaf. No doubt it is a fragment of some sculptured wreath from the temple ;—a bit of plunder dropped in the path by some thief.

After breakfast, we visited the most elegant of the smaller buildings ;—the circular temple with an hexagonal cornice. Only four pillars of the six remain, and the edifice is crumbling away. The Greek Christians have daubed the inside and the door-posts with their wretched paintings.

We rode to Ras-el-Ain, the spring of the river of Baalbec ; and on our way, we passed mosques, whose arches are supported by elegant marble Corinthian pillars ;—symbols of the Sun-god having come to do homage to the latest Prophet.—The place of the spring is pretty ;—a grassy spot, enlivened with welling waters. The yellow rose grew splendidly here. On our return, we once more went over the ruins, measuring the large stones, and completing our survey ; and then mounted to follow our baggage train across the Bekaa.

The land was roughly ploughed, very stony and weedy, but producing good crops here and there. Among the barley, I saw now a sarcophagus,—then a hewn stone covered with sculptures,—and, standing up conspicuously in the wide level, the pillar called Hamoudiade. This mixture of elements of scenery, with the colonnades of Baalbec surmounting the trees behind, was strange enough : but the whole was further perplexed and made remarkable by a mirage in the plain, almost as deceptive as that in the Field of Damascus.—At the village of Dayr-el-Akmar, we obtained a guide, to conduct us over the Lebanon.—We had been warned that the Cedars were never accessible before June, from the depth of the snow : but we were disposed to try to reach them. Instead therefore of following the road to Tripoli, we now saw that road part off to our left ; and we went more directly up the face of the mountains, nearly opposite Baalbec.

CHAPTER III.

CROSSING THE LEBANON.—THE CEDARS.—EDEN.—
JOURNEY TO BATROUN.—LAST ENCAMPMENT.

THE passage of the Lebanon was very agreeable,—the path winding among woodland,—(chiefly holly, with some oak),—and over a profusion of wild flowers,—the yellow jessamine abounding as much as any. We rode up steep ascents, and down to shallow valleys, so that we were on the whole rapidly mounting. As I was riding behind, a man offered me some goats' milk, which was so welcome that I paid him lavishly. He followed me for more money, which I would not give: and when I overtook my party, I found that Mr. Y. had sent him to me, having paid handsomely for the milk. Thus the visits of strangers are made profitable.—The next little valley we overlooked was that in which we were to rest for the night; and our tents were already pitched. Its aspect was very Alpine, from the scantiness of its crops, the character of its wood, and the water-fall which came leaping down in successive stages, from the verge of the snows above.—I went up the hill-side, among the crevices where the waters took their leap, and there I bathed, in the coldest water I ever felt. This refreshment, and the pure air of the mountain were like new life, after

breathing so long in the depressing atmosphere of the plains.

The next morning, we reached the summit of the pass in an hour and forty minutes. The path was zigzag, and very steep, and so little encumbered with snow, that there was no difficulty whatever. We crossed two or three patches of not more than a foot in depth: and that was all. We could see Baalbec the whole way, by looking back over the Bekaa: and I should think, by the evening light, the colonnades must be visible, standing above the screen of wood. To our left spread the little Lake Limoun, looking so calm and still, that for some time I supposed it to be mere mirage. The moment of turning away from the ridge, and losing sight of Antilibanus, was rather sad: for we felt that this was our true farewell to the East. We were parting from the Plain of Hollow Syria, and from the pass leading to Damascus; and from the peaks which closed in the Valley of the Jordan; and henceforth we must look only westwards.

This first western view was extremely fine; and we were not disappointed by blinding mists, as so many travellers have been who, coming hither with their minds full of Volney's description, have found all blank. There was haze over the sea: but we could distinguish the lines of the breakers, and presently, a fine jutting headland, and even its reflection in the waters. The abysses of the Lebanon valleys were most striking, with their red and grey rocks, not lying in strata, but rising in perpendicular masses, supporting platforms, on which stood villages, with cypresses for spires. Overlapping mountains, cut asunder by these abysses, succeeded

one another to the coast. Between us and the highest terraces,—terraces which reached an incredible height,—stretched snowy and barren slopes. Beshirai, on an isolated platform, bristling with cypresses, and showing lines of flat roofs, was far below us: and so was Eden on its hill;—Eden which is perched so high, that the inhabitants live in it only during the spring and summer months.—A few steps further, and we saw the Cedars,—a patch of dark wood at the base of the slope to our right,—just below the verge of the snow.

There was more snow on this than on the eastern side: and the road was rugged, swampy, and slippery: but I did not find it necessary to dismount, and reached the cedars dryshod.

These trees have now spread, from being a mere clump, to a wood of considerable extent. They stand on undulating ground,—on a nook of hill and dale which is exceedingly pretty,—its grassy and mossy surface shaded by the enormous old trees, and sprinkled all over with their seedlings. The priest who lives on the spot pointed out to us three trees which are declared to belong to the most ancient generation, and which devotees would fain make out to have been growing in Solomon's time. There are nine more which look equally old; that is, as old as possible. Of these nine, one measured 38 feet 11 inches round the trunk: and one of the three oldest measured 30 feet. It is under this last that mass is performed once a year; and its trunk is carved all over with names. The priest told us that he had lived there, beside the little chapel, for twelve years, and that no accident had befallen any of the old trees in his time. The

Christians call the trees “ Saints :” and when we asked how the Mohammedans regard them,—knowing that they come hither in pilgrimage,—we were told that they call them “ god-trees.” Their spread over the slopes is beautiful ; and far down the declivities, their roots come out so woody and thick as to look like prostrate trunks. One of the second generation, the nine, is so strangely cut that we inquired the reason, and found that an Abyssinian monk lived in it for many years, in all weathers ; till, at last, a rude hut of stones was built for him, which is still standing. The priest brought us wine, and gave us information very civilly. I would fain have staid a day ;—or a week, if we could ; for it is a charming spot : but it was thought necessary to proceed to Eden,—nearly three hours further, on a rough and hilly road.

The valley which opens about half an hour before Eden is gloriously beautiful. Wherever we looked there were red precipices, marvellously terraced, and white waterfalls, and capricious green slopes, and streams rushing in conduits or natural channels ; and groves of mulberry and fig, about the little villages, perched in apparently inaccessible places. Eden is a Maronite village, crowded with churches ; and the flat roofs of its houses were already occupied with trays of silk worms.—We saw it to no advantage, it being enveloped in mist this evening, and damp and dreary with mountain rain in the morning. We encamped on a stretch of grass near a large walnut-tree, from whose old roots a stream leaped in a pretty waterfall. The people were very handsome ; and we saw a good deal of them, as they gathered about us, and lost no opportunity of peeping

into the tents.—When the wind went down in the evening, I stole out, and sat on a wall in the shadow, to see what I could of this new world. The handsome women, with the becoming fillet on the forehead, were talking in the light of the fires: the last gust had parted the mists, and the depths of the gorges began to appear, while two glorious planets were going down behind a western ridge:—the lighted tents looked warm under the spreading walnut-trees; and the guard were patrolling on the outskirts of the camp. We missed much of the peculiar beauty of Eden: but I shall not forget what we did see there.

The next day, May 8th, was to take us to the coast. We were to encamp within the sound of those breakers whose white line we had discerned from the summit of Lebanon. We had been advised to go down by the gorge of the Kadesha to Batroun, instead of pursuing the ordinary road towards Tripoli. There could be no doubt of the superior beauty of the route by the gorge: but our adviser had forgotten that we had loaded mules with us; and that for such there was no proper track. We had so many delays from this cause, as to give us a most fatiguing day's journey. We were in the saddle eleven hours: but we did not regret our choice of route.

We took a guide from Eden, who seemed to be highly pleased with his engagement. He spoke to every one we met, and hailed all the men at work in the fields, and all the women who were gathering leaves in the plantations; and the name Batroun was in every speech: but he did not always know the way, and twice, at least, led us wrong.—At the outset, a thick mist came down

upon us, and thoroughly wetted us. The road was a rough track, which sometimes failed us altogether: and where it did not, it was the most rugged we had met with, except one or two passes in Arabia. In the steepest part, where it was a mere staircase of rock, where I kept my seat only because the water was rushing down ankle deep, my mare made too long a step, and slipped on her knees; and at the moment, the crupper of my saddle broke:—of course, the saddle fell over her neck, and I over her head. No one was with me but the guide; and he was in such consternation, that his only idea was to hold us both in our actual position till the rest of the party came up. There was no mischief done but the spoiling of the comfort of my saddle, and that I twisted my ankle slightly, and tore my skirt to strips.—We went down through the midst of terraced mulberry-plantations; and between walls where there was no room for the laden mules to pass: so that we were delayed while the fences were sufficiently pulled down to make a passage. When we came to narrow ways between flat-roofed houses, the spectacle was very amusing. Our people got upon the roofs, and lifted up the burdens of the mules high enough to let the animals pass beneath, letting down the load again at the end of the strait. While one mule was passing in this manner, those behind occupied themselves with browsing on the grass and weeds which grew on the house tops. The charm of wild-flowers now again began to appear; and the cyclamen and cistus bordered the track.

When we emerged from the mist, the scene was glorious,—the gorge of the Kadesha opening below us,

and the rich skirts of Lebanon stretching away to the shore. The track down to the torrent was so narrow that the burdens of the mules occasionally struck against the rock on one side, throwing the animals off their balance, and threatening to knock them over the precipice on the other side. The drivers upheld them with all their strength : and one man, while doing this, missed his footing, and tumbled over and over to a considerable depth. There he lay as if dead : and it was scarcely possible to doubt his being fatally hurt. Alec scrambled down after him, and performed a feat which I should have thought impracticable for one so slightly made. He took up his more bulky comrade in his arms, and shook him up and down, as if he wished to dislocate any joints which might not have undergone that process already. After some minutes of this rough exercise, the restorative effects were apparent. The man showed himself capable of voluntary movement ; and was presently as cheerful as usual.—Meantime, the foremost of the party had discovered that the proper bridge over the torrent was gone. The piers and fragments showed us what a safe and handsome bridge we might have found there at some former time : but now there was only a slight temporary bridge over the most tumultuous part of the torrent, where it was made yet more noisy by the junction of a roaring rapid from a mill on the opposite side. It required some little command of nerve for us rational beings to pass it, leading our restless horses : but some of the mules had no idea of any self-command ; and they positively refused to set foot on the bridge. By hood-winking, pulling, and many blows, all were forced over but two ;—a little one, and one as large as a horse.

We stood for more than half-an-hour in a damp mulberry plantation, watching the devices of the drivers. At last, a strong body of them lifted up the hind legs of the animal, and forced it over the bridge, wheel-barrow fashion. Then the creatures had to be reloaded; and much time was lost at this bridge. Next, one of the mules fell over, exactly as the driver had done on the other side: and he would have tumbled into the torrent, if three men had not jumped down in an instant, and propped up the animal with their shoulders, till his burden was removed, and he was led up to the path.—By this time, we began to wonder when we should get to Batroun: and I, for one, hoped that we should encamp somewhere short of it. The men were breathless, and evidently not equal to many more such adventures this day. But as we wound up the gorge, among thickets of thorns and wild roses, it was a comfort to see Alee sitting sideways on his horse, smoking his chibouque, and trying to help laughing at the tatters of my skirt.—On the opposite side of the ravine, the effect was strange of the slanting strata, fringed and feathered with tall upright trees. It made me so giddy that I could not look up at this confusion of lines while riding above a precipice.

On emerging from the gorge, we saw Tripoli, on the shore to the north, and commanded a noble stretch of coast: but when we sat down for luncheon, the sea looked so far off that I did not believe we could reach it before evening: and indeed the enterprise was rash.—On we went, over hills and round them, and dipping into valleys where we had no business, and from which our puzzled guide had some

difficulty in extricating us. In clambering out of one of these, a young man of the company received a dreadful kick on the knee from one of the horses. He was faint with the pain: and we feared it was something worse than a bruise: but next day he was limping on again, so as to show that no bones were broken or displaced.—Late in the afternoon, we saw so many villages, ruins, and convents placed on the crests of the hills, as to show that we were approaching the more peopled neighbourhood of the coast. And when we inquired for Batroun, we were told it was “down below,—there!” but the grey sea-line was still very distant: and I knew that Batroun stood out into the sea.—It was just twelve hours from breakfast, when we descended our last long and formidable hill; — a glaring limestone steep, with precipices on the left hand. At one point, the path made a sharp turn on the very verge of a precipice, at a great height. My sight was dim, my head giddy, and my limbs trembling from exhaustion,—my fatigue having been greatly aggravated by the uneasiness of my saddle, since the accident in the morning. As I saw my companions passing this point singly and slowly, I had some doubts about doing it myself; and I carefully looked away from the precipice. At the most critical moment,—on ~~the~~ very verge,—my saddle turned. By a sudden check, I pulled my horse round, so as to fall on the ground instead of down the steep. My companions could not persuade me to mount again till we were on level ground. Mrs. Y. rode on to send me wine: and by means of that refreshment, and Mr. E.’s stout stick to help

my sprained ankle, I at last reached the bottom of the hill.—Then there was nearly an hour's ride to Batroun.—We found blessed rest when we got there. Our tents were pitched on a low grassy cliff just above the breakers, which lulled us with their steady roll and dash upon the shingle of the beach. The sun had set: but the grey clouds which hung above the sea still showed a crimson glow; and there was a streak of yellow light on the waters near the horizon. As I lay on the thick grass and daisies in the tent, listening to the sea, I felt very well satisfied with the adventures of the most fatiguing day of our travels.

The next day, (Sunday, May 9th,) was easy enough. We had the refreshment of sea-bathing to begin with; and the journey was short and safe:—safe for a party numerous enough to defy the robbers who are said to abound along this shore.—When we came forth in the morning, we found that Batroun was on our right hand, standing out finely into the sea, on a picturesque rock. This place gives his title to a Maronite prelate; and the inhabitants are chiefly Maronites. Some of them came about us, and seemed kindly and cheerful.—Our road this day was almost wholly upon the cliffs, above the fine broken rocks of the shore, and sometimes descending among them. Almost all the men we met carried spears. At a sharp turn on the shore, when my companions had just disappeared behind a point before me, two men with spears ran up to me, one on each side my horse, and laid hold of the bridle,—one of them shaking his weapon in my face. Whether these were any of the coast robbers we had heard of,

I do not know. My party were within call; but I thought there would be trouble and a scuffle if I brought our servants and these men into collision: so I twitched my rein out of their hands, laughed in their faces, and rode away. They made no attempt to stop me; and their purpose may have been merely to beg.—At distances all along the shore are cafés, where the inhabitants sit under trellises, or garlanded sheds, to smoke and talk,—and also, it seemed, to take their meals.—Many anglers were busy at the pools among the rocks,—each one carrying his spear with his fishing-rod. Many women came down to the shore for the fish caught: and others were busy in the plantations, stripping the mulberry trees.—Nothing struck us more than the number of convents which crested the lower eminences of the Lebanon. With them, and the scattered villages, the region looked more peopled than any rural district we had seen for long.

Batroun, on its promontory, was in view for some hours: and I think it was before we lost sight of Batroun that we saw, to the south, the headland on which stands Beirut, the limit of our journey;—the port from which we were to set sail. Between them, and nearer to Batroun, lies Djebail,—the old Cæsarea: and there we stopped for our noon-day rest,—visiting the Citadel,—so battered by British guns,—and the granite pillars, which lie in large numbers in the sea, and are built into the neighbouring walls.—About a mile south of Djebail, we crossed the Natural Bridge, which is as pretty as Natural Bridges always are; and soon after, turned up the rapid, clear stream which flows down Wadee Ibraheem Adonis. My mare seemed

as little inclined to cross the bridge as the stream,—not liking its steep steps at both ends, its height, and its having no parapet. The banks below were rich with oleanders and other shrubs; and the whole scene so striking that we were glad to find our tents pitched not far off, on the shore, in the angle made by the river and the sea. It was yet early; and we had many hours before us for enjoying our Sunday repose. There was something sad about it too: for this was to be our last evening in our tents. We had been very happy in our tents; and I, for one, knew that I should never taste that kind of life again. For hours this day, I lay upon the sand, or walked along the margin of the waves; and I seem now to be able to recal all that I saw, and all that passed through my mind, during a day of busy thought.

The blue ridge to the south, which showed white specks in the sunset light, was the limit of our travels, the dwellings of Beirut being visible even thus far. Before me lay the sea, our homeward path: and behind lay the East,—the birth-place of the Ideas which have hitherto governed mankind. Within me were stirring speculations how long these ideas will govern mankind; and how largely they will enter into the views which must, sooner or later, arise out of the Western Mind, to animate and enlighten future generations in all the regions of the earth. It is scarcely probable that the function of the western races should for ever continue to be to receive and amplify governing ideas, and never to originate any.—The world and human life are, as yet, obviously very young. Human existence is, as yet, truly infantine: infantine in its unconsciousness of its

best powers, in the restriction of its knowledge, and in its subjection to its natural passions. It can hardly be but that, in its advance to its maturity, new departments of its strength will be developed, and the reflective and substantiating powers which characterise the Western Mind be brought into union with the Perceptive, Imaginative and Aspiring Faculty of the East, so as to originate a new order of knowledge and wisdom, and give a continually higher and truer employment to the faculties of Reverence, self-government, and obedience which are common to the whole race.

From out of these speculations now spoke the still small voice of conscience, prescribing the part which every thoughtful person who had accepted the privilege of exploring these Eastern regions should take in aid of the work of enlightening the human mind. Such a function, once recognised, is not to be declined by any one because his powers are humble, his knowledge partial, and his influence insignificant in his own eyes. The thoughtful traveller must have some knowledge, and some ideas which he could not have obtained at home, and which the generality of people at home cannot obtain for themselves. These he cannot, in fidelity to himself and his fellow-men, ignore, or bury out of the way of his convenience and repose. If he derives from his travels nothing but picturesque and amusing impressions,—nothing but mere pastime,—he uses like a child a most serious and manlike privilege. The humblest thinker, the most diffident inquirer, may be ashamed to make so mean a use of so gracious an opportunity. Moreover, he will be afraid of so selfish

and undutiful a levity. He feels that, however lowly his powers, he must use such knowledge and reflective faculty as he has : and again, he feels that if he can speak, he must.

He must speak ; and with fidelity. Bringing together, and testing with his best care, what he knows, he must say what he thinks, and all that he thinks, on the topics of which his mind is full. It is no concern of his whether what he thinks is new ; nor, in this relation, whether it is abstractedly and absolutely true. Probably, no one can say anything which is abstractedly and absolutely true. When all thinkers say freely what is to them true, we shall know more of abstract and absolute truth than we have ever known yet.—It is no concern of the thoughtful traveller's whether what he says is familiar or strange, agreeable or unacceptable, to the prejudiced or to the wise. His only concern is to keep his fidelity to truth and man : to say simply and, if he can, fearlessly, what he has learned and concluded. If he be mistaken, his errors will be all the less pernicious for being laid open to correction. If he be right, there will be so much accession, be it little or much, to the wisdom of mankind. Either way, he will have discharged his errand ; and it is so important to him to have done that, that he will think little in comparison of how his avowals will be received by any man, or any number of men.

Such are the considerations which have impelled me, without conferring with inclination, or attending to any natural misgivings, to offer as I have done my views of some features of Eastern Life, present and past. I could not have accepted the privilege of my

travels without accepting also their responsibilities. Having, as well as I could, endeavoured to discharge these responsibilities, I can henceforth look back upon the regions of the East with more freedom and pleasure than I could from that Syrian shore, in the light of the last sunset I was ever to watch from the door of our tent.

APPENDIX.

A.

DE SACY, in his version of Abdallatif's book, gives a long note* on the subject of the connexion of Pompey's Pillar with the Alexandrian Academia and Library. After telling us that he will not enlarge on the evidences already offered by Messrs. Langlès and White, nor insist on the testimony of Arabian writers who may have copied from Abdallatif, he proceeds :

"I will just observe that there is much weight in the testimony of a judicious writer, who declares that he had himself seen the remains of these columns, and who finds whatever he says about their destruction, and about the date of that destruction, on the unanimous report of all the inhabitants of Alexandria. I may add that this event, which happened in the reign of Saladin, took place at the utmost thirty years before Abdallatif's journey into Egypt: and also that the name of the column is a strong confirmation of the story. I can easily believe that there may be much exaggeration in the number of four hundred columns, and even that Karadja was guilty of nothing worse than completing the ruin of an edifice which time had already damaged, and employing the materials in a manner worthy of an ignorant Mussulman: but the foundation of the story is not, for this, the less certain and invincible. The only thing which could be desired for further confirmation would be some testimonies from Mohammedan writers of one or two centuries earlier than Abdallatif, who, in their descriptions of Alexandria, might mention these colonnades as existing in their times. Mr. White has satisfied some of our wishes in this matter, in citing a passage from the abridger of Edrisi, who attests that the pillar in question belonged to an edifice situated in the middle of the city, 'whose columns,' says he, 'are

* Note 53, on Livre I., ch. 4.

still standing. The door jambs also remain. This edifice forms an oblong square ; there are sixteen columns on each of the shorter sides ; and sixty-seven on each of the longer. Towards the northern side, there is a great pillar adorned with a capital, and set on a pedestal of marble,' &c. Edrisi, of whose work this author gives a mere abridgment, wrote about the year 548 of the Hegira, and therefore fifty years before Abdallatif. His testimony therefore confirms what our author relates of the ruin of this edifice in the time of Saladin.—I can here cite other authorities equally positive."—De Sacy does accordingly give testimonies from Arabian writers prior to Edrisi ; testimonies which leave no doubt what they were writing about, though some oriental exaggeration is mixed with their narratives. "These authorities," De Sacy goes on to say, "leave no doubt that the column now called Pompey's Pillar owes its Arabian name of Pillar of the Colonnades to the porticoes by which it was surrounded, and which were still standing, at least in part, in the time of Saladin."—After adducing the authority of some modern scholars in support of the facts under notice, De Sacy proceeds :

"I cannot satisfy myself without adding to the testimony of the Arabian writers one much more ancient, which, it appears to me, has not been sufficiently attended to, but which has not been neglected by M. Zoëga. It is taken from the writings of the rhetorician Aphthonius.* Aphthonius, after having described the situation of what he calls the Acropolis of Alexandria, the elevation of the ground, the difficult roads by which it is approached, the hundred steps which must be mounted to reach it, and the propylon which adorned the entrance, continues thus : 'When we enter the citadel, we find an area bounded by four equal sides ; so that the shape of this edifice is that of a brick-mould (an oblong square). In the midst is a court surrounded by columns ; and to this court porticoes succeed : the porticoes are also divided by columns of the same proportion. . . . Each portico terminates at the angle where another portico begins : and there is a double pillar which belongs at the same time to both,—being the last of the one portico and the first of the other. Within the porticoes, apartments have been built : some, which contain books, are open to those who are

* Aphthonius, a rhetorician of Antioch, is supposed by some to have lived in the second century of our era, and by some later. His works, now little known, were in high esteem in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

disposed to apply themselves to the study of Philosophy, and offer to the whole city an easy means of acquiring wisdom : the others have been consecrated to the worship of the ancient gods. These porticoes have a roof ornamented with gilding, and the capitals of the columns are of copper gilt. The court is decorated with embellishments of different kinds : each part has its own : there is one place where we see the battles of Perseus. In the midst of the court rises one pillar of extraordinary height, and which serves to make this spot conspicuous : for, when one arrives, one would not know where to go if this column did not serve as a sign to point out the ways. It makes the citadel as conspicuous to those on the sea as to those on land. On the capital of the pillar are placed all round the elements of every thing that exists.'—There are some variations," De Sacy goes on to observe, "between the description of Aphthonius, and that of the Arabian authors : but they are of little consequence. I suppose that the rhetorician points out, in the last sentence, the dome erected on the capital of the pillar, which contained either the principal divinities to whom created things owe their existence, or symbols of the elements." De Sacy then declares his belief that this place is no other than the SERAPÉUM, in arriving at which belief, he follows Strabo's account of the position of that temple.

On the summit of the column is a socket. The question is what it held. Aphthonius says, as we see, "the elements of every thing that exists." Abdallatif saw on it a cupola : while, according to other Arabian writers, it once supported a bronze statue, which was melted down for coin. On the whole, it seems to De Sacy reasonable to suppose that the pillar supported a small observatory, wherein were represented astronomical figures, and deposited the equinoctial circles spoken of as used for observations by other writers.

Enough seems now to be known to relieve the traveller in Egypt from the blank uncertainty under which his predecessors have till recently gazed upon Pompey's Pillar.

B.—p. 81.

Directions have been given in abundance by preceding travellers to those who may follow them up the Nile and across the Desert, about preparations for the expedition. Without repeating what Sir G. Wilkinson and others have said as well as possible, I may give a few hints which may be of use at least to ladies.

Every traveller who is going to the East must, if he values health and comfort, take the sleeping apparatus which is called Levinge's bag. A full account of it is to be found in Sir G. Wilkinson's "Modern Egypt and Thebes." The makers must not persuade the purchaser to desert the original make,—with one circle of canes,—for a more complicated and expensive one. The simplest is the most convenient, and, as I can testify, answers every purpose. The comfort of this bag, to those who are nervous about vermin, or easily annoyed by them, is inestimable. The certainty that one is safe from every intruder tends of itself to give one good nights. The traveller will, of course, see that his bag is never left open for a moment ; and that no one is ever allowed to put a hand within it who cannot be trusted for cleanliness. It is sufficiently aired by being shaken out of doors,—the muslin of the canopy being coarse enough to admit the air freely. The coarser the muslin the better, as long as it keeps out fleas.

The traveller should not be alarmed if he finds he sleeps little during such a journey. If he is kept awake by vermin or by fever, of course, that is a great evil : but an easy quiet sleeplessness will do him less harm than he might suppose. There is, I imagine, something in the mode of life,—the absence of one's ordinary business, and the stimulating influences of an open air life which makes sleep less necessary than at home. However this may be, I know many travellers who found, as I did, that less sound sleep, and much less of it, than at home, did them no harm while abroad ; and that they resumed their regular sleeping habits on their return. It is worth mentioning this, to save any inexperienced traveller from the supposition that he is or will be ill, because he cannot sleep as he does at home.

As to the very disagreeable subject of the vermin which abound peculiarly in Egypt,—lice,—it is right to say a few words. After every effort to the contrary, I am compelled to believe that they are not always,—nor usually,—caught from the people about one : but that they appear of their own accord in one's clothes, if worn an hour too long. I do not recommend a discontinuance of flannel clothing in Egypt. I think it quite as much wanted there as anywhere else. But it must be carefully watched. The best way is to keep two articles in wear, for alternate days ;—one on, and the other hanging up at the cabin window,—if there is an inner cabin. The crew wash for the traveller ; and he should be particular about having it done according to his own notions, and not theirs, about

how often it should be. This extreme care about cleanliness is the only possible precaution, I believe : and it does not always avail : but it keeps down the evil to an endurable point. As far as our experience went, it was only within the limits of Egypt that the annoyance occurred at all. Fleas and bugs are met with : but not worse than at bad French and Italian inns.

The traveller should carry half a dozen gimlets, stuck into a cork, and daily at hand. They serve as a bolt to doors which have no fastening, as pins to any thing he wants to fasten or keep open, as pegs to hang clothes, or watch, or thermometer upon ; as a convenience in more ways than could be supposed beforehand.—Two or three squares of Mackintosh cloth are a great comfort,—for keeping bedding dry,—for ablution, and for holding one's clothes in bathing. By substituting them for carpets, also, in Nile boats, there is a relief from danger of vermin.

As for dress,—the first consideration, both for gentlemen and ladies, is to have every possible article made of material that can be washed :—gloves, among the rest. Cotton or thread gloves are of no use, unless of the stoutest kind. The hands are almost as much burned with these as with none. Woodstock gloves (which bear washing well) are good, though, of course, they do not look very handsome.—Brown holland is the best material for ladies' dresses ; and nothing looks better, if set off with a little trimming of ribbon, which can be put on and taken off in a few minutes.—Round straw hats, with a broad brim, such as may be had at Cairo for 4*s.* or 5*s.*, are the best head-covering. A double-ribbon, which bears turning when faded, will last a long time, and looks better than a more flimsy kind.—There can hardly be too large a stock of thick-soled shoes and boots. The rocks of the Desert cut up presently all but the stoutest shoes : and there are no more to be had.—Caps and frills of lace or muslin are not to be thought of, as they cannot be “got up,” unless by the wearer's own hands. Habit-shirts of Irish linen or thick muslin will do : and, instead of caps, the tarboosh, when within the cabin or tent, is the most convenient, and certainly the most becoming head-gear : and the little cotton cap worn under it is washed without trouble.—Fans and goggles,—goggles of black woven wire,—are indispensable.—No lady who values her peace on the journey, or desires any freedom of mind or movement, will take a maid. What can a poor English girl do who must dispense with home-comforts, and endure hardships that she never dreamed of, without the intellectual enjoy-

ments which to her mistress compensate (if they do compensate) for the inconveniences of Eastern travel ? If her mistress has any foresight, or any compassion, she will leave her at home. If not, she must make up her mind to ill-humour or tears, to the spectacle of wrath or despondency, all the way.—If she will have her maid, let her, at all events, have the girl taught to ride,—and to ride well: or she may have much to answer for. To begin to ride at her years is bad enough, even at home, where there may be a choice of horses, and the rides are only moderate in length. What is a poor creature to do who is put upon a chance horse, ass, or camel, day by day, for rides of eight hours' long, for weeks together ? The fatigue and distress so caused are terrible to witness, as I can testify,—though we were happily warned in time, and went unincumbered by English servants altogether. Of course, the lady herself is sure of her ability to ride to this extent ; or she will put herself into training before she leaves home.

As to diet,—our party are all of opinion that it is the safest way to eat and drink, as nearly as possible, as one does at home. It may be worth mentioning that the syrups and acids which some travellers think they shall like in the Desert are not wholesome, nor so refreshing as might be anticipated. Ale and porter are much better ;—as remarkably wholesome and refreshing as they are at sea. Tea and coffee are pleasant every where. Ladies who have courage to do what is good for them, and agreeable to them, in new circumstances, in disregard of former prejudices, will try the virtues of the chibouque while in the East : and if they like it, they will go on with it as long as they feel that they want it. The chibouque would not be in such universal use as it is in the East, if there were not some reason for it : and the reason is that it is usually found eminently good for health. I found it so : and I saw no more reason why I should not take it than why English ladies should not take their daily glass of sherry at home ;—an indulgence which I do not need. I continued the use of my chibouque for some weeks after my return ; and then left it off only on account of its inconvenience : and in the East, it is not inconvenient. The traveller there finds that his reasonable disgust at the cigar-smoking of our streets does not apply to the Eastern practice. The quality of the tobacco, and the length of the pipe (in which the essential oil is condensed, instead of being imbibed by the smoker) make the whole affair something wholly different from any smoking known in England. I need not say that every traveller is absolutely obliged

to appear to smoke, on all occasions of visiting in the East : and if any lady finds refreshment and health in the practice, I hope I need not say that she should continue it, as long as she is subject to the extraordinary fatigues of her new position.

She must not expect health in those countries : and she had better not be discouraged or alarmed if she finds herself seldom in a state of bodily ease. If she takes rational care, and makes up her mind cheerfully to the temporary indisposition, she will probably be as well as ever when she gets home. Her chief care should be to look to the health of her mind,—to see that she keeps her faculties awake and free, whether she is ill or well ; that in the future time she may hope to be at once in possession of her English health, and the stores of knowledge and imagery she is laying up by her Eastern travel.

C.—p. 99.

In a paper delivered by the Rev. Dr. Abeken before the Egyptian Society at Cairo, occurs the following passage. Dr. Abeken was a member of Dr. Lepsius's party.

Speaking of Semne, in that part of Nubia which lies between Wadee Halfa and Dongola, Dr. Abeken says :

" But the most interesting point connected with this locality, is a number of inscriptions engraved partly on the rocks, partly on the walls built against the mountain, as substructions to the buildings. They are short, containing a date with a king's name from the above-mentioned Twelfth Dynasty (most by Amenemha III.) and beginning with a hieroglyphical group, which at first sight it was evident could mean nothing but *the height of the Nile at that date*, being literally Mouth or Opening of the Nile. We were first struck by these inscriptions on some fallen blocks on the eastern bank, where it was evident from the position of the inscriptions that they had been engraven before the stones had fallen ; afterwards we found many of them on the eastern bank in their original place, but at a height which the Nile never obtains now, being no less than 9-10 mètres above the present highest water. These ancient water-marks therefore appear to prove that before the time of the Shepherds, the Nile, *in that part of Nubia*, must have risen much higher than at present ; and do support, I think, most conclusively, the opinion that at that period there must have existed in the Cataracts a bar to the river much greater than what is now to be found there ; that owing to this bar, the Nile in those times rose in Nubia, not in Egypt, to a height never attained now, and

thereby formed the deposit of fertile soil which we found in Upper Nubia, at distances and heights wholly unaccountable from its present rise ; that at a later period this bar was broken down by some great revolution, which also caused the fall of the above-mentioned blocks, and in consequence of which the waters above the Cataracts were brought down to the same level as those below them, and thus deprived Nubia to a great extent of the benefit of the inundation.—For a more detailed account I must refer to Dr. Lepsius's able development of his views in his Report to the Berlin Academy of Sciences, where will also be seen the connection which he most ingeniously establishes between these water-marks, belonging almost exclusively to one reign, and the great works said to have been executed by King Mæris for the irrigation of the Fayoom and Lower Egypt."—*Report of the Egyptian Society*, 1845.—pp. 13-14.

THE END.

